

Terre des hommes

aide à l'enfance / Kinderhilfe  
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# Traditional Games for child protection

Terre des hommes is the leading Swiss organization for child relief. Founded in 1960, Terre des hommes helps to build a better future for disadvantaged children and their communities, with an innovative approach and practical, sustainable solutions. Active in 33 countries, Terre des hommes develops and implements field projects to allow a better daily life for over 1.4 million children and their close relatives, particularly in the domains of health care and protection. This engagement is financed by individual and institutional support, of which 85% flows directly into the programs of Terre des hommes.

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## introduction

The MOVE project<sup>1</sup>, implemented by Terre des hommes (Tdh) in Eastern Europe (Romania, Moldova and Albania) and financed by UEFA over a period of four years (mid-2008/mid-2012), has trained more than 1 000 animators/teachers in the methodology “*Movement, Games and Sports*”(MGS)<sup>2</sup>. This methodology avoids competition and exclusion, promotes more cooperation and integration in sports and games, reinforces the resilience of vulnerable children and improves their psychosocial well-being in general; all this, thanks to the development of their life skills (adaptability, cooperation, empathy, managing emotions, communication, responsibility, etc.). The people trained have hence allowed approximately 10'000 children to benefit from specific activities with very encouraging results, such as reduced aggressive behaviour, better relationships with their peers and with adults. Also, for the most vulnerable children, there was a clear improvement in their so called ‘dysfunctional’ behaviour<sup>3</sup>.

The MOVE project has also proven in its three countries of intervention that the MGS methodology greatly contributes to child protection in the following way:

- By modifying the attitude of adults in charge of children for a larger participation of children as actors of their lives.
- By reinforcing the life skills of children towards greater self-esteem, resilience and self-protection.
- By participating in case management through games and feedback in order to facilitate the identification and protection of children at risk.
- By reinforcing community involvement via the participation of key community members in activities and training.
- By promoting the action of Terre des hommes in residential homes/prisons thanks to a comprehensive and fun tool that allows difficult topics to be dealt with.

With reference to this unique experience, we thought important to create a list of 15 traditional games played in these three countries of Eastern Europe in order to promote their culture and therefore allow a majority of people to benefit from these

resources. In order to obtain an updated game manual for child protection that is accessible to everyone, we have added five ‘international’ games - those most often played and appreciated in the first manual of 20 games ‘*Laugh, run and move to develop together: games with a psychosocial aim*’ developed par Terre des hommes in 2007<sup>4</sup>.

The particular addition to this manual of traditional games, compared to the first manual mentioned above, is found in the chapter ‘*Links with child protection*’ added to every game. This chapter is to be used if needed as a **tool for child protection** by asking children questions about factors of self-protection. This makes this manual an important element of the Tdh child protection projects.

## A. Structure of the manual and the games

This manual contains 15 traditional games from Eastern Europe (Romania, Moldova and Albania) and five 'international' games with strong psychosocial and protection elements, which combine mainly creativity, imagination and strategy. They are aimed at children from 4 to 14 years old and classified by age group: from 4 years-old, from 6 years-old, from 8 years-old and from 10 years-old, ranging from the simplest to the most complex. Every game contains the following information:

- The country of origin of the game, even if we often find similarities with other known games, since one of the characteristics of traditional games is their relative universality.
- A small summary of the goals of the game.
- The age group, only as an indication, since every game is adaptable.
- The abilities developed at a mental, emotional and physical level.
- The materials when some are required, but most of the time these games are simple and do not necessitate specific materials.
- The detailed organisation and rules.

- Advice for running the game and possible variations.
- Questions for running the feedback at the end of the game.
- Links with child protection for discussion if desired.

The methodology of learning by doing is necessary, if one wishes to reap the benefits of developing life skills for the children and of better childhood protection in general.

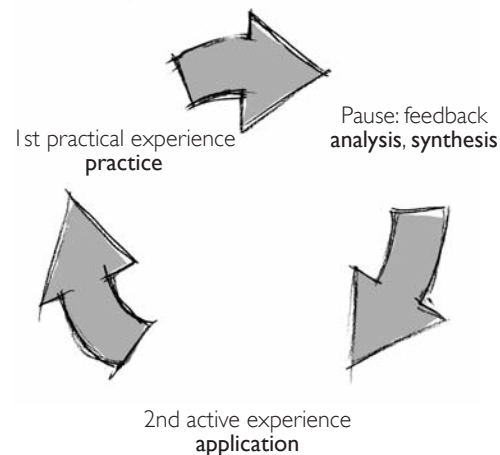
## B. Method of 'learning by doing'<sup>5</sup>

*«Tell me and I will forget; show me and perhaps I will remember; involve me and I will understand.»*

This Chinese proverb highlights the main difference between the traditional way of teaching, based on imparting information, and the empirical way which allows the participants to work out the theory from practical experience. It is not learning in an academic sense but rather a process of transformation that is aimed at. It is about bringing changes in attitudes and abilities to

enable children to experience and develop their own resources.

To reach a certain number of changes in attitude, we use a specific methodology which is inspired by the theory of 'experiential learning'. We have simplified the concept developed by Kolb in the following diagram:



Active participation of children is essential in this learning method. Everything comes from them and goes back to them, thanks to the mediation of the animator. The mental, physical and emotional involvement, the thinking and discussions after the experience, all mean the child is fully prepared for new discoveries and new behaviours.

Animators have a choice of using this method with children or not. They can organize the game in a spontaneous way, drawing on its fun and recreational aspects. But they can also decide to emphasize precise abilities so as to develop life skills for the children. In this case, they will run the activity in three stages to promote long-term learning and changes in behaviour.

**1. First practical experience (practice):** after getting instructions (short and clear), the children discover and experience a new game.

**2. Pause for discussion and feedback (analysis of what has happened and synthesis of improvements to be made):** after some time, the animator stops the game, gets the

children together and asks them if there were any difficulties (of understanding, technical, relational) or suggestions etc. and how it could be improved. There is an exchange of impressions and feelings, precise suggestions for improvement; the animator focuses the children's attention on one or two important points (according to the psychosocial objectives set, for example personal responsibility, improved communication, and so on).

**3. Second active experience (application and improvement):** the children experience the game a second time, more consciously, as their attention has been drawn to some important elements. True learning takes place at this precise moment and the quality of the game or activity improves. Verbalizing the experience brings the rational part (head) into the kinaesthetic (body) and emotional (heart) experience, enabling a conscious improvement of actions and behaviours.

This cycle can be repeated as often as wished, with several pauses for feedback, until the animator sees that the objectives are achieved and that the desired behav-

iours are reached. The repetition of the same game will not seem boring for children, as it is one of the principles of learning, as long as the goals to be reached are precise and the game suited to their level.

**Note of caution:** this method requires that the animator does not play with the children, but remains outside the game, to maintain a certain distance and observe the game's progress and the children's behaviours. This is necessary to be able to give relevant and targeted feedback. Playing together with the children has the advantage of creating other ties with the group. However, emotions can block the objectivity and impartial observation required to properly accompany the children in acquiring new skills and reflexes for self-protection.

## C. Benefits of the games for better child protection

### Child protection at Terre des hommes

The two areas of expertise of Terre des hommes Foundation are Health and Protection. Tdh has been working since 2000 on the development and reinforcement of child protection systems in the countries where it is actively present. As described in the thematic policy on Protection Systems, the aim of this work is *"to guarantee, globally and structurally, the existence and the quality of the services aimed at protecting the rights and the well-being of all children on the scale of a given territory. The main idea is to optimize resource management, to increase the number of children benefiting from their rights, to provide them with better opportunities, to avoid all discrimination and to support the commitment and collaboration of all the actors concerned on the scale of a state or of a territorial entity. The communities and the families are also taken care of in order to participate as key actors in the area of child protection"*<sup>6</sup>.

As we demonstrate below, play should be considered as a fundamental activity, being an integral part of any child protection systems.

### Self-protection and resilience thanks to games<sup>7</sup>

The benefits of the games for better child protection have been largely demonstrated, and especially in a recent study on the children's right to play, whether in a situation of development or of crisis. Playing is a mechanism of survival and protection, because while children play they create their own well-being, according to Bradshaw et al. 2007. Indeed, through playing, children externalise their impulsions and inner world in a safe environment that helps them to reconstruct themselves and develop their resilience.

Thanks to new situations 'beyond the real world', specific to games, the children are forced to adapt and adopt original behaviour because 'everything is possible'. *"This external behaviour is matched with an internal connection process; a novelty of wiring potential in brain circuits (Gordon et al. 2003; van Praag et al. 2005)."* (...) Play supports novel neural connections and changes the architectural structure of brain regions through its own value and fabulations (pleasurable and 'as if' behavior); 'the brain not only shapes play ... play also shapes the brain' (Pellis and Pellis 2009:94)."

These different elements as well as managing one's emotions, managing stress, bonding, creativity, learning, etc. put playing in a direct relation with the brain's systems of adaptability. But the most important are mainly pleasure and joy in play: *"Feelings of joy and pleasure are associated with more flexible and open responses to situations and with effective problem-solving, self-control, forward-looking thinking and caution in dangerous situations (Isen and Reeve 2006)."* (...) Research suggests that experience of pleasurable situations may have benefits for dealing with stress and negative experiences (Silk et al. 2007, Cohn and Frederickson 2009)."

Bonding reveals itself to be another primordial factor while playing, because friendship and positive relations between peers have protective effects, according to Abou-ezzedine et al.'s 2007. *"Play becomes an important medium for establishing peer friendships, learning about social dynamics and the rules of engagement (Fantuzzo et al. 2004, Panskepp 2007)."*

## Self-protection thanks to sharing and discussions<sup>8</sup>

Playing being a privileged language of children, it allows them to externalise their emotions and constitutes an ideal means for initiating discussions focused on themes that can be sometimes sensitive. Every game brings about a particular situation that is possible to link to subjects of child protection. It is up to the animator to evaluate the need or not to approach certain subjects with the children, and to choose the appropriate moment. Suggestions are made in this manual, at the end of every game in the part '*Links with child protection*', for dealing with topics such as personal safety or strategies and behaviour that evaluate and manage personal risks, also called self-protective behaviour. The following themes can therefore be approached with the children thanks to questions suggested directly after the game. Integrating these topics is fundamental to child protection and goes beyond practical and basic information such as health, hygiene or nutrition.

► **Identity:** Do all children know their full name, the name and address of their parents or the people responsible for

them? Where is all the information that could help identify or reunify the children if they were lost, separated, traded, if they became refugees or caught up in an emergency situation? What are the elements that make them feel good, that make them feel 'at home', even if they are not (e.g. refugees, displaced, migrants, etc.)? Etc.

► **Physical contact/psychological injuries:** Are there physical contacts that are not appropriate? How to make the difference between 'good' and 'bad' touch? What can they do when someone touches them and they do not want them to? What is a psychological injury? What can they do when they do not feel good inside? What to do when they see someone feeling bad? Etc.

► **Choices/responsibilities:** How to make the right choices? What circumstances could lead them to make a choice that could put them in danger? What could they do differently? How to take the right decisions? How to be responsible? How does it feel to be responsible? Are there situations where they should not

be held responsible? (e.g. looking after younger brothers and sisters)? What can they do in these situations? Etc.

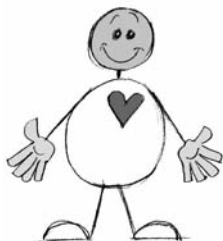
► **Trust:** How to decide whom they can trust? Are there any people that they should not trust? Who are the people in their lives they can rely on or to whom they can speak to if there is a problem (parent, teacher, educator, etc.)? Who should they not trust? When should they follow others or obey and do what they are told? On the contrary, are there situations when it is not wise to follow someone or obey? When can they put themselves in danger by copying someone? Etc.

► **Safety/mutual help:** What to do to be in security and help others? What can they say if they notice something that is not right for themselves or for others? Is it better sometimes not to get involved in situations that concern others, for instance when their own security is at risk? Who are the people they can call for help in case of danger? What can they do to help each other and collaborate to stay safe? Etc.

It is important to remember the essential role of the animator who is expected to facilitate these discussions and who needs to possess the personal and social skills<sup>10</sup> necessary to adequately manage groups of vulnerable children. Here are some recommendations taken from the Albanian document *Enhancing Child Protection through Activities and Games*:

- It is important for the animator to remember that the links with child protection should not be systematically mentioned in every activity! Children should not become scared or too cautious, but we also need to make sure that child protection does not become a topic evoked only in therapy situations or enclosed areas. Child protection should be part of everyday life without forgetting that the main purpose of the games is not protection but pleasure in playing and the natural development of life skills that result from it.
- It is not necessary or even possible for the animator to have the 'right answer' for everything! The questions suggested help explore certain themes with the children but answers to each one of them are not necessarily obtained. The important thing is to ask what children are thinking and why, since it helps them develop their inquisitiveness, important for analysing all sorts of situations. What is said by the children can provide precious information on what they go through and to what they can be exposed. But it is also necessary, depending on the situation, to send clear messages like their right to say 'no' and to be protected!
- The animator must be receptive to 'alarm signals' which may indicate a real problem; for example, a child who is too aggressive, who touches other children in a 'sexual' manner<sup>11</sup>, or on the contrary who is very reserved; there may also be signs of mistreatment like bruises or injuries etc.

## D. Global skills developed through games<sup>12</sup>



As described above, playing is fundamental to stay healthy, as well as for well-being, development and child protection. Certain immediate benefits that are already recognised are, the fact

of “providing important physical exercise that develops endurance, control of body movement and perceptual-motor integration; testing aspects of the environment to deduce their value; establishing social roles and alliances that may contribute to current survival; enhancing psychological and physiological well-being and resilience (Burghard 2005).”

Beyond the topics exposed in the study on the children's right to play, playing allows children to develop a certain number of life skills for better protecting themselves: better self-confidence and self-knowledge helps them assert themselves, be more responsible, make choices, make decisions, evaluate when people are safe or not, etc.<sup>13</sup>

*“Playing with others requires constant maintenance, reading and differentiating the intentions of others and adjusting behaviours in response. It is evident that these interrelated components enhance children's repertoire of social, emotional and cognitive abilities (Pellis and Pellis 2009)”.*

Playing therefore allow general skills (mental, emotional and physical) to be developed which helps to acquire or modify certain attitudes and behaviours in order to improve the capacity of long term resilience: self-esteem, self-confidence, feeling of security, cohesion in a group, etc. We talk about the three H's (Head, Heart, Hands).



## I THINK

### **Mental abilities**

1. Self-knowledge: knowing oneself, what one likes or dislikes, ones' values, strengths, resources, weaknesses, etc.

2. Concentration, observation, learning: integrating new knowledge, understanding instructions, paying attention, not dividing one's attention, perceiving what's going on around, applying what has been learned, etc.

3. Analysis, strategic thinking: reasoning in a logical way, questioning things, thinking before acting, finding solutions and strategic ways to act, etc.

4. Creative thinking, imagination: being inventive, having ideas, entering an imaginary world, etc.



## I AM (with myself and others)

### *Emotional abilities*

5. Trust: feeling good with oneself, taking initiatives, daring to do things with others, counting on others, etc.

6. Respect, empathy: guaranteeing one's own and other's security, and physical and psychological well-being; not being brutal or violent verbally or physically towards oneself and others; avoiding judgement, putting oneself in the shoes of another, etc.

7. Communication, expression of emotions: expressing oneself in front of others, saying things in a constructive way, expressing one's feelings, managing sadness or anger when difficult situations arise, sharing other people's joy, etc.

8. Managing problems and conflicts: being a 'good loser', knowing how to talk rather than shout or hit others, looking for solutions together, etc.

9. Cooperation: taking action, playing, creating together, including everybody, showing solidarity, helping others, negotiating, making group decisions, etc.

10. Responsibility, fair-play: taking responsibility, being disciplined, committing oneself, being accountable, respecting rules, not cheating, being honest, etc.

11. Adaptation, flexibility: being receptive, curious, not being stuck with an idea or an action, adapting to what is new, etc.



## I DO

### *Physical and manual abilities*

12. Speed, strength, resistance, endurance, flexibility: running fast, carrying heavy loads, keeping stamina going over shorter and longer periods, having a flexible body, etc.

13. Coordination, agility, precision: having well-coordinated body movements, alone or with someone else, being able to adapt with one's body to an environment and the challenges it offers, being precise in one's gestures, developing fine motor skills, etc.

14. Reaction, rhythm, balance: responding immediately to a stimuli/situation, using one's body to follow a tempo that is given by an external rhythm, keeping a stable position while staying still or moving, etc.

15. Body awareness: knowing one's body, its possibilities and weaknesses and feeling good with it, knowing how to move harmoniously when needed, feeling relaxed, letting go, etc.

## E. Characteristics and benefits of traditional games <sup>14</sup>

Traditional games belong to what we call the traditional popular culture. Pierre Parlebas, professor in Sports Sociology in Paris, emphasizes children's educational interest especially through their important use of imagination: "*children play, run, catch, imprison, set free, execute, resuscitate... numerous situations which produce symbolic actions*". The characteristics described above offer many possibilities, either regarding group structures, roles to impersonate or goals to achieve, and allow the development of new skills:

- Imagination plays a fundamental part in these games. The symbolic implication is much more important than in a collective sport and allows children to better understand themselves and develop their creative thinking.
- Very often it is not two teams that oppose each other, but three even four, establishing dynamics that are no longer those of opposition but of seemingly contradictory choices<sup>15</sup>. This type of game promotes collective strategies that

allow a certain form of creativity and not only force children to make individual choices but also to concentrate and be attentive.

- Most often, these games are played without materials, nor a ball, which allows the players to place all their attention on observation and interpersonal relations.
- These games encourage everyone's participation, allowing each one to get involved, to succeed and to assume a role leading to self-appreciation vis-à-vis the group.

Through their cultural links, the traditional games also have an impact in reinforcing identity, a factor of resilience. They actively participate in the children's well-being by making them feel they belong to a group, a community and a collective history. This is even more important when working with displaced children, migrants or refugees for example.

We notice that traditional games have many advantages, and symbolism is strong. Nonetheless, and for psychosocial and protection purposes, the symbolism of war,

of violence and of exclusion which is often present, will be minimised because it goes against any messages of cooperation, mutual help and integration that we want to transmit in our child protection projects. It is therefore necessary to make some adjustments in order to reap the most benefits. The adapted version of a traditional game must preserve as much as possible its cultural roots and its basic background. The story, however, is modified when necessary, in order to create new dynamics that take into account certain important aspects of psychosocial activities, like abandoning all forms of exclusion and individualism and promoting cooperation (mutual help, group actions) and participation (children are in action as often as possible). All these changes have been suggested by animators from Eastern Europe themselves, integrating the psychosocial principles which they have discovered during the MOVE project.

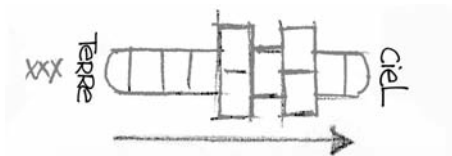
For example, in the Romanian game nr.17 "The countries", the basis of the traditional game is to conquer countries by touching a rival. The goal is to obtain the most territories, in a war-like way. The Romanian an-

imators have therefore suggested to modify this game by introducing passes to other players with the aim of establishing alliances between countries, and to better understand certain characteristics of each country. This means common points between allied countries can be found, thus working on getting to know others, developing non-judgement, non-discrimination, etc.

Here is another complete example of a modified traditional game:

### Hop scotch<sup>16</sup>

This traditional game, known all around the world, consists of going from the Earth to the Sky as quickly as possible by throwing a stone in a square and hopping on one or both feet. There is no competition in this game, but rather an individualistic version in which each one completes their round, with emphasis on the ability to aim for a square with a stone and to hop, balanced on one foot without falling over. Those who do not succeed must go back to the start and pass their turn, or depending on the version, they may be eliminated.



The game, once it is adapted in its psychosocial version, does not involve elimination and individualism and focuses mostly on cooperation, respect for others, strategic planning, fair-play, coordination and agility in pairs.

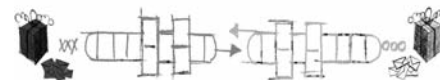
Here is the story that allows setting these objectives: the chief/mayor/leader of two communities asks the inhabitants for help, because all the mail, including a very important package, has been exchanged that day. They need therefore to get organised to get the mail and the package back from the other community. To achieve this, they need to cross the meadows by staying on the marked paths. They will meet the other inhabitants on the same paths, themselves in search of their own mail. They are not allowed to be on the same squares with the other inhabitants at the same time, but have the right to pass each other only when the path is wider (double squares). The goal is that the two communities re-

cuperate the mail that belongs to them. The game is finished once one entire team has returned to its village with all the mail (one per member of each community).

#### Rules

- Once a first pair (two members of the same community) has reached a double square, a second pair can start, etc.
- It is important that the inhabitants coordinate so they do not walk on the same squares.
- They can choose to move on one foot (traditional hopscotch) or on two feet.
- If one of the two players places a foot outside a square, the pair must automatically start from the beginning.

For this 'psychosocial' version a second Hopscotch is drawn opposite the first one. Every team starts on the opposite side, but this time advancing from one end to the other still using a stone.



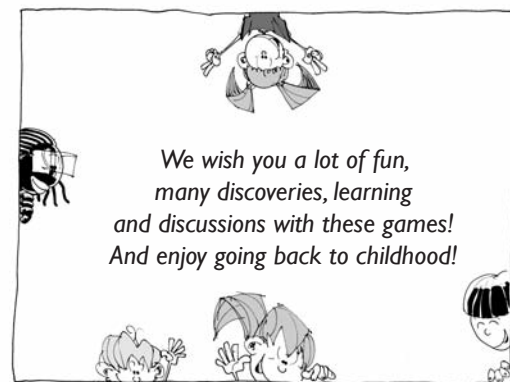
The mail can be represented by any object or even by real letters or packages (differentiated by a colour or else), placed on either side, positioned at the end of each hopscotch that will have to be picked up (two per pair of players) before returning to their respective community.

It is important that the rule of crossing is respected, because the teams have the tendency to focus only on the goal and the race, forgetting the basic rules. The animator must observe if and how the pairs anticipate the moves of the other team in order to avoid finding themselves on the single squares at the same time. It is important to encourage the pairs to admit their mistakes if they find themselves on the same square with another pair and make sure that they return on their own to the start. If such is not the case, the game must be stopped, the basic rules repeated, and possible strategies discussed.

At the end of the game, the following questions may be asked with the aim to make everyone think about their own behaviour and about possible links with child protection:

- How did it go regarding strategy, coordination, cooperation and fair-play?
- Were the rules respected or not (not crossing the lines with their feet, not to be found on the same squares with the other players, etc.)? If not, for what reason?
- What was the easiest and quickest strategy of cooperation (bring the mail to the other team at the junction of the two hopscotch drawings, and therefore avoid difficult crossings)? Why didn't you think of it? Could you have thought of it and thus cooperate with more efficiency?
- Are there any more possible variations? Which ones? Can we imagine a different story, on the same principle?
- Have you learnt anything new? If yes what?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Is there mutual help in your own community? Who are the trustworthy people, or on the contrary the people you should not trust?
- Are there some things you would not dare to do on your own, but only with someone else? For example? For which reason?

- Do you know your own address and that of your friends to the point of being able to bring them their mail? Which are the other important addresses?
- Etc.



# notes

1. For more information on the MOVE project, see [www.tdh-childprotection.org/projects/move](http://www.tdh-childprotection.org/projects/move)

2. The MGS methodology uses 'learning by doing', which puts child participation at the heart of the learning process and involves the child globally at a mental, emotional and physical level. Its all-inclusive approach comprises lots of occasions for feedback (verbalisation) that require an active and conscious commitment by the child. See video 5': [www.tdh.ch/en/documents/bouncing-back-thanks-to-games](http://www.tdh.ch/en/documents/bouncing-back-thanks-to-games). This methodology is at the centre of the *Manual of psychosocial skills*, Tdh, 2011: [www.tdh.ch/en/documents/manual-of-psychosocial-skills](http://www.tdh.ch/en/documents/manual-of-psychosocial-skills).

3. For more information on the impact of the MGS methodology on children, ask for the results of the research-action conducted throughout the duration of the MOVE project, more specifically with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ).

4. Manual *Laugh, run, move to better develop together: games with a psychosocial aim*, Tdh, 2007. It contains 20 games as well as information regarding the place of play in a child's world, the skills required for the animators, etc. [www.tdh.ch/en/documents/laugh-run-and-move-to-develop-together-games-with-a-psychosocial-aim](http://www.tdh.ch/en/documents/laugh-run-and-move-to-develop-together-games-with-a-psychosocial-aim).

5. Chapter B 'Method of learning by doing' is taken from the *Manual of psychosocial skills*, Tdh, 2011, pp.5-6.

6. *Enhancing child protection systems, thematic policy*, Tdh, 2011, p.3.

7. The paragraph on 'Self-protection and resilience thanks to games' is taken and adapted from the study of Stuart Lester and Wendy Russell, *Children's right to play: an examination of the importance of play in the lives of children worldwide*, Bernard van Leer Foundation, UK, 2010, pp. 7-26.

8. The paragraph on 'Self-protection thanks to sharing and discussions' is taken and adapted from the document *Enhancing Child Protection through Activities and Games: Tips, Ideas and Reminders for the Summer Camps*, Tdh Albania and Stephanie Delaney, 2011.

9. 'Good touch' avoids all intimate parts (covered by the swimming costume generally), and does not cause distress, on the contrary; 'bad touch' makes children very uncomfortable, they avoid it and they want to keep it a secret.

10. See list of skills for social workers and animators in the *Manual of psychosocial skills*, Tdh, 2011, p.9.

11. We mean by this touching one's intimate parts, being physically too close, having insistent body contact, etc.

**12.** Chapter D. 'Global skills developed through games' is taken and adapted from the *Manual of psychosocial skills*, Tdh, 2011. [www.tdh.ch/en/documents/manual-of-psychosocial-skills](http://www.tdh.ch/en/documents/manual-of-psychosocial-skills).

**13.** The quotes in chapter D. 'Global skills developed through games' are drawn from the study of Stuart Lester and Wendy Russell, *Children's right to play: an examination of the importance of play in the lives of children worldwide*. Bernard van Leer Foundation, UK, 2010, pp. 7-26.

**14.** Chapter E. 'Characteristics and benefits of traditional games' is taken and adapted from Pierre Parlebas, "Jeu sportif, rêve et fantaisie, *Revue Esprit* no 5, pp.784-803, Ed. du seuil, Paris, 1975.

**15.** The example of the game "Hen, Fox, Viper" on p. 185 of the *Manual of psychosocial skills* demonstrates a structure of a paradoxical game, since capturing (hunting) can provoke ideas of mutual help (e.g. the Foxes eat the Hens, but they may help the Vipers; the Hens peck at the Vipers, but they may help the Foxes; the Vipers bite the Foxes, but they may help the Hens). The players realise that once they have made a prisoner they are deprived of a participant that has the power to protect them; they need therefore to make choices.

**16.** The game "Hopscotch" is taken and adapted from the *Manual of psychosocial skills*, Tdh, 2011, p. 139.

YOUR TURN!  
TO PLAY

# 1. The Sun and The Moon

## Moldova

A simple, fun game that allows young ones to develop their capacity for concentration and their mobility by moving around in different ways. The idea of imitating good and bad

attitudes can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

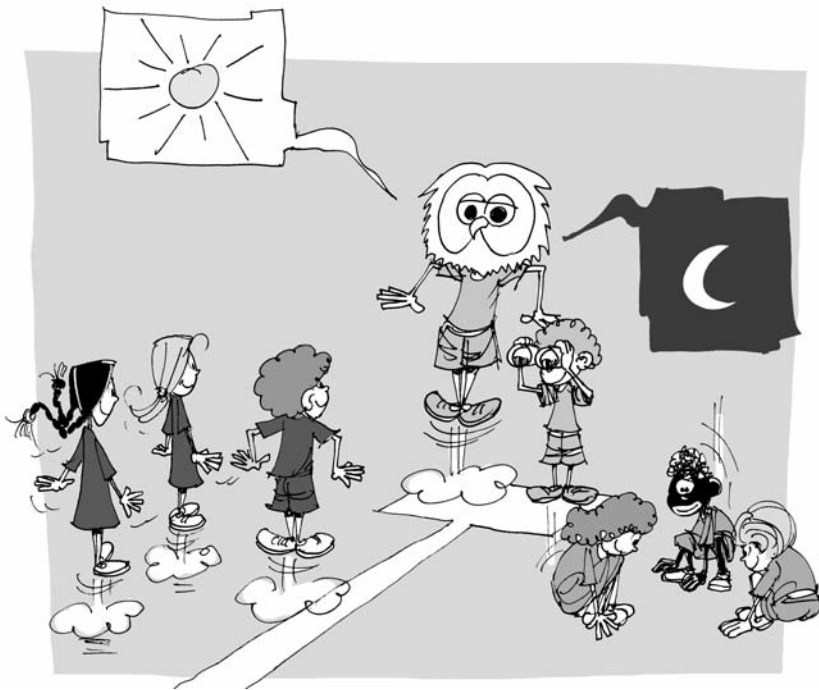
4-8 yrs

### Abilities

- On a mental level, the children work on their ability to concentrate and observe, and develop their creative thinking in their choice of how to move around.
- On an emotional level, the children develop fair-play and a sense of responsibility.
- On a physical level, they work on movement coordination and the capacity to react.

### Organisation

The children move around freely in a big enough play area which is marked out by the animator. The animator and the children play out different ways of moving around. Then the game can start. The owl – who is the animator at the start, then the children take turns – is the time keeper. When he says 'sun', the children need to copy the way the owl moves around (feet together;



by little jumps, imitating an animal, etc.). When he says 'moon', the players need to take up the night position previously decided and demonstrated (crouched down with their head in, lying flat on their tummies, etc.). An observer is chosen at the beginning of the game to help the owl find which player is the last to take up the relevant position. This child then becomes the observer and the observer becomes the owl. And the game continues like this until all the children have had a chance to play the role of the owl.

**Rules:** The roles are switched as follows: a player → the observer → the owl → a player.

The players must move around in the way the owl decides.

It is strongly recommended to find a new way to move every time a different child plays the owl. Use of imagination is necessary!

### Advice

It is important that the owl gives each player a chance to practise the movements but not for too long, to avoid it becoming too easy.

The animator must make sure all the play-

ers get a chance to play the role of the owl, even if it is during a different play session.

If the animator realizes that some children do it on purpose being the last in order to become the owl, then he can change the rule and it is the first player taking up the relevant position who becomes the observer and then the owl.

The animator can also decide to tell a story where the words 'sun' and 'moon' appear frequently.

To make the game more cooperative, the players can be put into pairs (holding hands, arms, etc.), which increases their confidence in each other and the need to consult with each other and to coordinate the movements.

To vary the game, the night position (moon) can also be changed by the group and related to the way that is chosen for moving around.

For bigger children, the owl can be called something else, the words can be changed and the movements made more complicated.

### Feedback

● How did you feel the game went? What

was easy or difficult for you? For what reason?

- What role did you prefer? For what reason?
- Which movements did you prefer? For what reason?
- Have you learned anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find any links between the game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

The game requires the children to follow certain rules, and in any case, the natural tendency for a child is to copy or to imitate each other. It is then possible to explore what it means to follow what their friends do, when is it a good idea, when is it a bad idea, how do they feel or what could they do if they think what their friend is doing (or would like them to do as well) is not a good idea? Based on the ideas from the group, the discussion can be directed towards topics such as security, wise choices or not, etc.

## 2. The Sleeping Bear

### Romania

A short, calm game that allows the children to get to know each other better and to build confidence in a group through physical

contact. The notion of 'good' or 'bad' touch can be approached in relation to child protection.

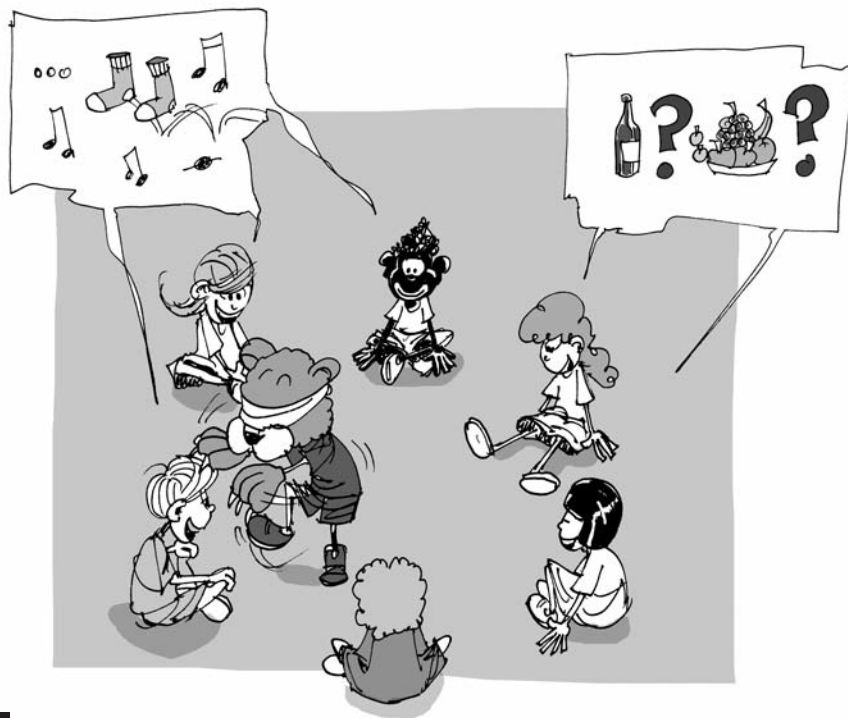
4-8 yrs

### Abilities

- On a mental level, concentration is important as well as observation skills.
- On an emotional level, children develop confidence and respect for others.
- On a physical level, nothing in particular except, that physical contact is of paramount importance.

### Organisation

The children sit in a circle. The child that volunteers to be the 'sleeping bear' is brought to the centre of the circle, eyes closed, and is turned several times on himself before sitting down. The others sing: "The bear sleeps and dreams that his socks are dancing... What should we give him to eat? Sweet milk or something else?" (Other words can be invented). At that moment, the bear approaches the children, still with his eyes closed and touches one of them



to try to recognise them by their height, their hair, their clothes, etc. The animator must make sure that any contact is respectful. If the bear succeeds, the child who is recognised takes the place in the middle of the circle. Once his eyes closed, the other children change places quickly. If the bear does not guess correctly after the second try, the others can help by giving clues about the person (for example, they have brown hair, they like football, they have two sisters, etc.) The game continues like this until each child has had a chance to be the bear.

### Rules

The bear must have their eyes closed during all of the guessing part of the game. The child who is picked by the bear must not speak or laugh so as not to give any clues (requires a certain amount of concentration).

### Advice

The bear must use tact when touching the players and the other children must not push him or try to disturb him. It could be useful to have a headband or scarf to use with the younger children, to

help them respect the rule that they should not look.

The children can form a circle, either sitting, standing, on chairs or any other appropriate position.

It is recommended to change the words used during the game, to adapt them to the context and experiences of the group.

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? What was easy or difficult for you? For what reason?
- How did you feel when the bear touched you? For what reason?
- To guess who you were, did the bear touch you in an appropriate manner, respectfully? How?
- What helps the most when trying to recognise someone?
- What role did you prefer? For what reason?
- Have you learned anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find any links between the game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This game allows the players to explore the notion of touching, or that of invading someone's personal space. Who to contact or what to do if someone invades their personal space without their agreement? What kind of physical contact can make them feel uneasy, hurt or be invasive? (physical violence, being violent or hitting, or being touched on the intimate parts of the body without giving permission).

### 3. The Cat and The birds

#### Albania

*This classic game of tag, works the children's imagination around birds. It develops cooperation and confidence between the children.*

*The notion of safe or dangerous places can be dealt with in relation to child protection.*

**4-10 yrs**

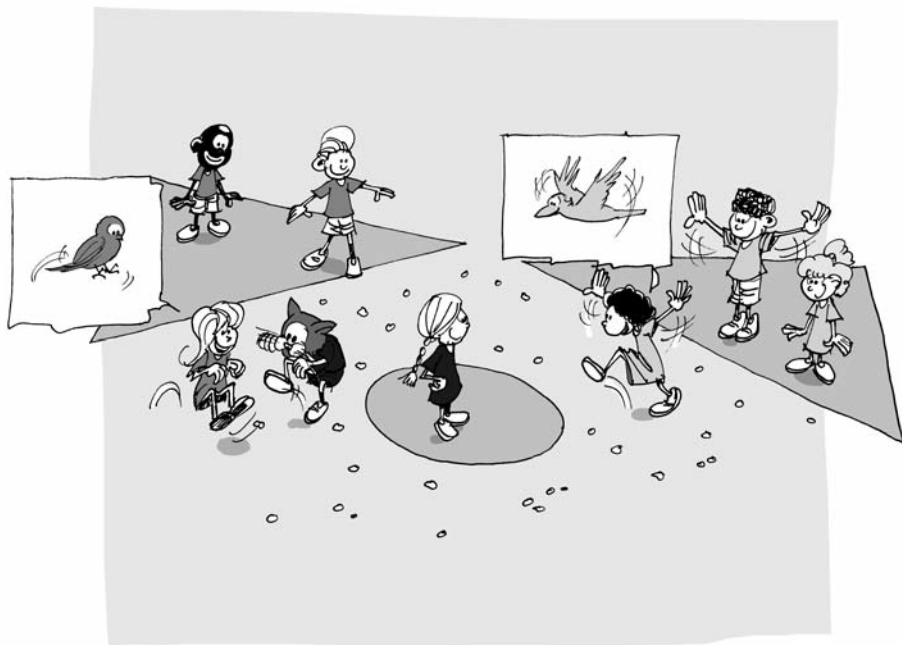
#### Abilities

- On a mental level, strategic thinking, as well as observation, are worked on.
- On an emotional level, the children develop cooperation, respect and confidence.
- On a physical level, speed, ability to react and agility are important.

**Materials:** little seeds (stones, little balls, bits of cloth or leaves, etc.); a hoop; cones or other objects to mark out the triangles (nests).

#### Organisation

The animator defines the play area based on the number of players (between 10 and 16) and marks out three zones in the form of a triangle to represent the birds' nests. The seeds are scattered on the ground to feed the birds (one seed per bird). The children first name different types of birds (sparrows, pigeons, seagulls, eagles, etc.) and



imitate their cries and the way they move. The cat can also be imitated by the players in different situations (asleep, hungry, scared, aggressive, etc.).

The group is divided into three families of birds that start the game in their nests; their aim is to each collect a seed and bring it back to the nest. A player takes on the role of the cat with the aim to catch the birds, put them in the cage that has been designated in the middle of the area, and stop the other birds from freeing them. The game starts when the animator calls a family of birds, the crows for example, to leave their nest to collect their seeds. If the cat catches a crow, they put the bird into the cage. The captured crow can be freed by any other bird, even from another family, and brought back to their nest, held by their 'foot'. When each crow has managed to bring back a seed, they return to their nest. Then another cat is chosen and another family of birds is called, and so on, until all the seeds have been collected.

### Rules

The cat cannot go into the nests, but he can move freely all around them.

The birds are obliged to leave their nests when they are called and cannot return

until they have collected a seed.

### Advice

With regard to touching/catching, the animator must remain attentive and ensure gestures are made with respect, to avoid any aggressiveness.

To make the game more dynamic, the animator may decide to call several bird families at once.

It is also possible to add another cat to create synergies and different action strategies (either two cats moving on their own or a pair that hold hands).

Depending on demand or the situation, the animals can be changed (antelopes and a lion, etc.)

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? What was easy or difficult for you? For what reason?
- What were the strategies used in your group?
- Did certain rules simplify or actually complicate the game? Which ones and for what reason?
- Have you learned anything new? If yes, what?

- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find any links between this game and your daily life? What are they?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This metaphoric bird game allows one to discover what 'leaving the nest to explore' means and how to protect oneself from dangers. What are the elements that help the children decide if a particular action is safe or not? For example, following what the teachers or parents say to do or not to do, following an unknown person? Etc. The notion of a nest allows them to deal with the idea of leaving home (leaving the nest) or what they should do to be sure that they are safe; for example knowing where they are going exactly or making sure that someone (an adult) knows where they are going, etc.

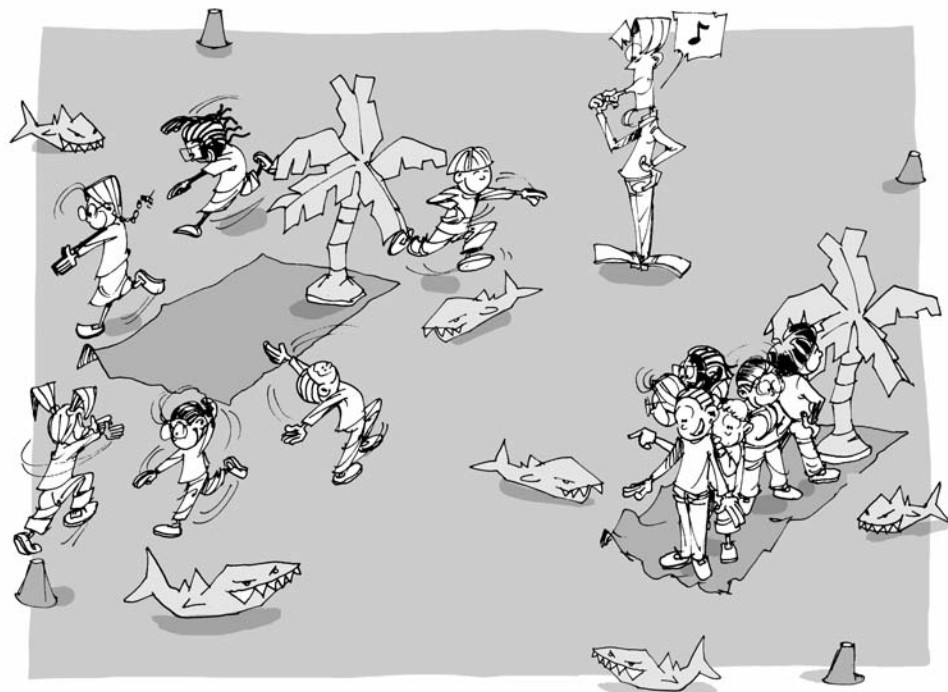
## 4. The Sharks' Island

### International

This short game focuses on the use of imagination and is applicable to little ones as to the older age group. While having fun, the children work on strategic thinking and cooperation, through physical contact. The most important

aspect of the game is to have an altruistic goal rather than an individual one. The notion of security, safe/unsafe places, reliable/unreliable people can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

**4-10 yrs**



### Abilities

- On a mental level, the children develop observation skills and strategic thinking.
- On an emotional level, the children develop cooperation strategies, as well as respect for each other and confidence through physical contact.
- On a physical level, the players can reinforce their balance or their strength depending on which strategy they choose.

**Materials:** small mat or any other object that can vary in size (ropes, plastic sheet, etc.).

### Organisation

The game is played by six to ten players maximum. If the group is too big, it just needs to be divided up so that two groups or more can play at the same time. Each group has their own island. The animator tells a story:

the children are at the sea, they swim and play in the water (run using swimming strokes). When the sharks (imaginary) arrive, the lifeguard (played by the animator) gives a signal (clapping hands, whistling, etc.) and everyone must seek refuge on the island (small mat) without their feet in the water. Then when the danger has past, the lifeguard gives the signal twice and the children can return to the water. But the tide comes in and the island starts to disappear underwater little by little (the animator folds the mat so that the surface area becomes smaller and smaller). When the lifeguard gives the signal again, the children must try once again to reach the island without anyone being left in the sea. If one or several children are left in the water (a foot over the edge of the mat) and are eaten by the sharks, the whole group needs to do a forfeit: for example sing a song, run round the play area three times, make a human pyramid, etc. The children must find a way to cooperate (they can talk) and succeed in all finding a space on the mat.

### Advice

The level of difficulty depends on the number of players and the surface area of the

mat. It is up to the animator to manage and evaluate the abilities of the players.

The animator must be clear and strict with the instructions: not a single part of the body must be over the edge of the mat or touch the floor; this is what makes the game fun.

It is interesting to see what strategies develop. The tendency is often to think of oneself only (e.g. some children sit on the mat without thinking of the others). Individualistic behaviour can be a topic for discussion.

It is important to repeat the instruction and to encourage the children to discuss amongst themselves to find creative strategies (e.g. holding each other's elbows; balancing on the inside foot, the outside foot lifted; or making a human pyramid, or other forms). The players must agree to touch each other and accept to be touched. Respect for each other and confidence are important notions that the animator should remind the children of.

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? What was easy or difficult for you? For what reason?
- Was it difficult to be in physical contact with others? For what reason?

- What attitude did the children in your group have? Ready to help each other? Only looking out for themselves?
- Did anyone refuse to cooperate? For what reason?
- What did you think about the group forfeits?
- What positive or negative impacts or results could these have?
- Have you learned anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find any links between this game and your daily life? What are they?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This metaphoric game creates the opportunity to discuss who the 'sharks' are, the dangerous people in real life. Who are the 'lifeguards'? Where are the 'islands' (safe places) or other places where children can feel protected? How can the children help each other in order to be safe?

It is also possible to discuss the other 'dangers of the sea', for example the places or situations where the children can be more or less at risk (e.g. in the street, going away without being accompanied, being a victim of domestic violence, etc.).

## 5. Picki Zali Bufta Rafta

### Moldova

*This short game can be played either in a lively way to create tempo and a good feeling within the group, or in a calm way so that the children can relax, in pairs, through playful massages that help develop relationships and*

*trust in others. The notion of 'good' or 'bad' touch can be approached in relation to child protection.*

**6-10 yrs**

### Abilities

- On a mental level, concentration and letting go are worked on, as well as the memory for names linked with gestures.
- On an emotional level, the children develop communication skills, trust and respect for others.
- On a physical level, speed and ability to react are developed in the lively version and sensitivity of touch in the calm version.

**Materials:** one chair per child.

### Organisation of the fast version

All the children are seated on chairs placed in a circle, right next to each other and turned outwards (like in the game of *Musical chairs*). The animator explains the four hand positions to massage their neighbour's back: Picki: ends of both index fingers like raindrops.



Zali: two hands using the side of the hand (where little finger is), fingers straight and stuck together.

Bufta: two hands with the side of the hand (where the little finger is), fists closed.

Rafta: fingers spread and half-folded like a rake.

Everybody tries each massage position several times to make sure they have understood how to do them and have memorised their names. Then the game starts. The animator says one of the four names and the group repeats it out loud – Picki, Picki, Picki... while doing the relevant massage to their neighbour; very quickly the animator says another name, Bufta, Bufta, Bufta... and the players adapt their massage accordingly; etc. Nobody moves, they only work with gestures and their voices. When the animator says all four names, the players must change places and therefore change partners. And so it continues until everyone has been paired up with each player and all the massage movements have been used.

### Rules

It is forbidden to change places with their neighbour; the change must take place in a particular direction (which may be modi-

fied based on an additional instruction if wished, and to make the game more difficult).

Physical contact must be made respectfully, despite the inevitable excitement created by the game.

### Organisation of the calm version

The same gestures are used, but the children are seated on the ground or on a chair, in twos, one with the head dropped forward on the chest and back turned towards the other child. The one who is behind says Picki-Zali-Bufta-Rafta? and places their hands on the other child's back in one of the four positions. The child with the back turned must then take a guess and give the name of the gesture used. If the answer is correct, a 10-15 seconds massage is given with the relevant hand position. If the answer is not correct, there are two other tries. If the third guess is not correct, the masseur chooses another massage gesture. Then the roles are reversed.

### Advice

It is possible to find other names, relevant to the context and the wishes of the children, as well as new massage gestures.

For the fast version, once the animator has given the right pace to the activity, it is recommended that a chair be removed and the role of the animator given to a child standing up who must find a chair when everyone changes places. The person who is left without a chair becomes the animator.

For the calm version, the animator must make sure the children are aware that it is important to speak up if the way they are touched feels uncomfortable; it is important to emphasize that it is an activity for relaxation and this must be respected.

It is recommended to change partners to increase the number of contacts and the trust built between the children.

It is also possible to leave the choice of massage to the person who is going to receive it.

For the younger ones, the animator can facilitate the game by indicating the gestures to follow, without the guessing part.

For the bigger ones, it is possible to suggest

a series of gestures to help train their memory and coordination skills.

### Feedback

- How was this activity for you? Pleasant, unpleasant, funny, etc.? Can you explain?
- What was your favourite role? Giving the massage or receiving it? For what reason?
- Did you feel at ease, reassured? Did you feel respected? If not, for what reason?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find any links between the game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This game allows the players to explore the notion of touching, or that of invading someone's personal space. Who to contact or what to do if someone invades their personal space without their agreement? What kind of physical contact can make them feel uneasy, hurt or be invasive? (Physical violence, being violent or hitting, or being touched on the intimate parts of

the body without giving permission, i.e. those parts normally covered by the top and bottom of a swimming costume). Then the discussion can continue along the lines of who to contact or who to ask for help if someone happened to touch them in a way that disturbed them, etc.



## 6. Tiger Tiger Panther

### Moldova

*This lively game integrates the notion of physical contact in a fun way and can be used as a way to greet each other at the start of a*

*session. The notion of 'good' and 'bad' friends can be dealt with in relation to child protection.*

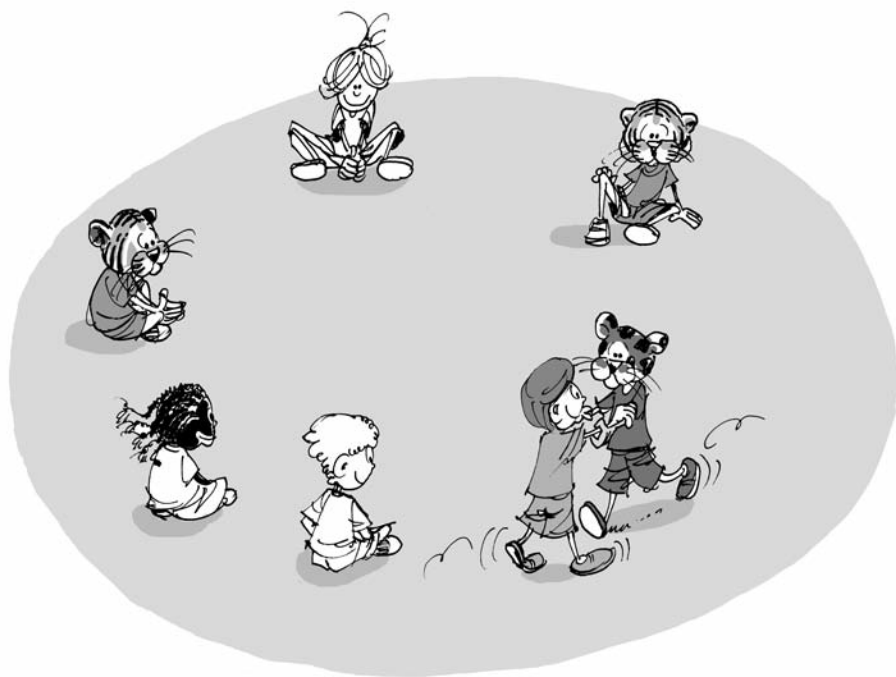
**6-12 yrs**

### Abilities

- On a mental level, observation, concentration and memory are important in order to not touch the same panther twice and therefore allow everyone to participate. Creative thinking and imagination are developed when unusual ways of greeting each other are pursued.
- On an emotional level, the children develop trust in others through respectful physical contact, as well as cooperation between all.
- On a physical level, ability to react and speed are worked on

### Organisation

The players are sitting or standing in a big circle with a good distance between each of them (at arm's length). A volunteer runs around the outside of the circle and on the way must touch two players on the



shoulder, calling them 'tiger'; but the latter must not move. The third player touched is called 'panther' who must then run in the opposite direction to the player who has touched him. When they meet, they must stop to greet each other (tapping each other in the hand, hugging, etc.), then run towards the free space left by the 'panther'. The last player to reach the free space becomes the runner. The game finishes when all the children have had a chance to run at least once.

### Rules

The players must stop to greet each other and must not do it while still moving or just slowing down. It is a real encounter and a greeting, even if the race continues immediately afterwards. The animator must keep reminding the players of this rule until it is truly respected.

It is the 'panther' who chooses the greeting and the other player simply responds. Each round the greeting must be different. The same player cannot run twice.

### Advice

The animator must make sure that the players are out of harm's way, because if the players run or greet each other in a dangerous or brusque manner, a rule must be added about walking fast or some other way of getting around (frog-like, on all fours, feet together, etc.).

The animator must make sure that children take note of who has already had a chance to run or not. All the players must take their turn at running, to encourage everyone's participation and cooperation within the group.

It is possible to imagine all different ways of moving around, of greeting each other, of waiting in the circle, etc.

The names of the animals can also be changed, depending on the theme of the session or the age of the children.

### Feedback

- How do you feel the game went? Was it easy, boring, fun, etc.? For what reason?
- What do you think of the physical contact with your playmates?
- Was it easy or difficult to find ways to greet the others? For what reason?

- Did you look out for your playmates? Did everyone get a chance to run? If not, for what reason?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find any links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This game of greetings to make friends can be used to explore different situations or people with whom they should not become friends or with whom they should keep a distance. Note, it is important not to scare the children or tell them not to talk to strangers – because in certain situations (for instance when they are lost), it is a good thing to ask someone for help. But the message should be that the children should not leave with anyone they do not know.

## 7. exchanging places

### Albania

*This game can be played at a fast or slow pace, but with a lot of trust and collaboration. It allows the players to work on their response levels and sense of direction in a fun*

*way. The feeling of belonging to a group, good or bad, can be dealt with in relation to child protection.*

**6-12 yrs**

### Abilities

- On a mental level, observation and strategic thinking are brought to the fore.
- On an emotional level, the children develop collaboration.
- On a physical level, sense of direction and response levels are developed.

### Organisation

Three or four children join hands and form circles. The animator chooses four names, says them out loud, and then whispers, in each child's ear, a different name from within the same category (e.g. geometric shapes: triangle, circle, square, rectangle; or animals, flowers, fruits, etc.); they keep their name secret. Two children stay separate from the groups and move around the play area; they know the four names and decide between themselves which one they will call out. Each child with this name runs out



of their circle and finds a place in another circle. At the same time, the children outside the circles run to find a free place in a circle, where two children are not holding hands. Those who manage to join a circle take the name that was called out. The two children who do not find a place then decide between themselves what new name to call out.

### Rules

Once a child has left a circle, the two neighbours must leave their hands free for a new child to join the circle.

### Advice

The animator reminds everyone that the newly arrived children should join the circles calmly and that the groups welcome them by taking their hand in a friendly way. It is possible to call two names at once if the group is large, which increases the participatory dynamics and creates more of a fun excitement.

It is important to allow time for the children outside the circles to define their strategy if need be.

In a reduced space, the way the children move around can be adapted: walking in-

stead of running, hopping, etc. It is recommended in any case to explore different ways of getting around (side-stepping, feet together, etc.).

### Feedback

- How do you feel the game went? Was it easy, difficult, etc.? Did you feel at ease? For what reason?
- What strategies were used?
- What does it mean to you, being part of a group? How was it joining the group, then leaving? Was there a group where you felt better or worse than in another? For what reason?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- Can you make any links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This game allows the players to explore the notion of belonging to a group and which are the 'good' groups or which are the groups to avoid (e.g. those that are

looking for trouble or have a bad influence). What drives children to befriend someone, to join a particular group rather than another? Etc.

## 8. The postman

### International

An ideal game for a group just getting acquainted or for a group that wants to get to know each other more and in a lively and fun

way. The notion of information can be useful to identify children at risk, in relation to child protection.

6-14 yrs

### Abilities

- On a mental level, the emphasis is on creative thinking (finding good ideas about what sort of 'post' to deliver), as well as concentration (listening) and memory about what has already been said.
- On an emotional level, the game develops communication skills, respect (non-violence) and fair-play.
- On a physical level, the players work on their capacity to react, their speed in running and their nimbleness.

**Materials:** if the game is played indoors, a chair per child; if it is played outside, a hoop per child, or chalk to draw circles, or ropes.

### Organisation

The players are seated on chairs in a big circle (or standing in a hoop, in a circle drawn with chalk, etc.). One player, the



postman, is standing in the centre. He says out loud: "The post has arrived..." The other players ask: "For whom?" The postman answers: "For all those who..." and makes something up: "... those who have a brother, those who have travelled to a certain place, those who are near-sighted, those who are wearing green, etc." Those concerned by the 'post' must get up and change places as quickly as possible. During this time, the postman tries to find a place. Whoever is left without a chair becomes the postman and brings the next post, for «all those who...".

### Rules

It is forbidden to change chairs with their neighbour.

The children must run when changing places (speed – ability to react).

It is not allowed to stay seated if the 'post' concerns them (fair-play).

A letter cannot be delivered twice (concentration and creative thinking).

### Advice

The first time, the animator can play the part of the postman so that the children understand how the game works. The post should be adapted to the age of the children. It can be focused on superficial criteria such as physical appearance for the little ones, or more personal criteria, such as beliefs, personality, tastes, etc. for the bigger ones.

The animator must insist on the pace of the game and on respecting the rules. He will ensure that the postmen are not always the same (an extra rule can be introduced: being a postman not more than three times for example), and that each child is the postman at least once.

The animator must remind the players of the security elements: they have a tendency to be very enthusiastic and to rush to the chairs without watching out for others (risking jostles and falls).

To make the game more difficult, the players can be standing (or crouched down) in their hoop, backs to the centre, etc. which requires more concentration and speed of reaction.

### Feedback

- How do you feel the game went? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease? For what reason?
- Did you learn anything new about one of your playmates? What?
- Did you like being the postman? For what reason?
- Was it difficult to find ideas for the post?
- Were you bothered by certain questions? For what reason?
- How did you feel being honest and revealing certain things about yourself?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- Can you make any links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

## Links with child protection

This knowledge and information game can allow the animator to quiz the children on what they should be aware of if they get lost for instance, or if they find themselves in a difficult situation (address, full names of their parents, telephone number or contact person, etc.). It is also possible to broach what is public information and what is private, what information can be shared or not (for example, the letter includes a public address, but what about the information contained within, it is private, etc.). The notion of truth, what to say, when to say it, to whom, or not, why, is an important theme also in the context of child protection.



# 9. The Witches

## International

An ideal game to warm up progressively and in a fun way. It is a special type of chase, in silence, that uses walking instead of running and introduces physical contact. Several notions linked with child protection can be dealt

with, in particular the question of touching, personal limits, the people who are threatening or those who are protective, or even the feeling of helplessness.

6-12 yrs

## Abilities

- On a mental level, the capacity of observation and concentration are developed in spotting the witches; strategic thinking is required amongst the witches to work together to bewitch all the villagers, as well as amongst villagers to develop a plan to protect and free the others.
- On an emotional level, this short game is very complete. The quality of physical contact elicits trust and respect for others; fair-play and a sense of responsibility are very important when abiding by the rules. The fact of having to free fellow citizens develops empathy and cooperation.
- On a physical level, everything is walked at a fast pace, and avoiding the witches requires an ability to react quickly, coordination and nimbleness.



## Organisation

This game requires a relatively large space, marked out and recognised by the players. The game begins with the players (minimum eight) standing in a circle, the witches and the villagers. The witches' goal is to bewitch all the villagers by simply touching them. The bewitched villagers must then freeze. The villagers' aim is to keep away from the witches and to free the bewitched victims by putting their arms around them ('hug'). The game stops when all the villagers are bewitched. Before starting, the group has their eyes closed in the circle and the animator designates the witches (one for every five or so players) by touching them discretely on the back. Everyone opens their eyes and the game can start at a fast walking pace, but without running.

## Rules

Players are not allowed to run or speak; everyone walks in silence. Anyone who starts running or who goes beyond the boundary of the play area bewitches themselves automatically.

## Advice

The animator must ensure the players respect the game's environment, the boundaries and the rules: no running, no speaking. Children have a tendency to accuse others of running or speaking, rather than focusing on their own fair-play during the game. The animator is there to remind them that they must each take responsibility for abiding by the rules. For example: the child who is touched must stop, the ones who go out of the play area or who start running must bewitch themselves immediately and stop where they are without anyone having to tell them to do so.

It is not easy for children not to run, but the animator must insist on it for this gives the game a different dimension compared to the usual chasing games. The fact of having to walk allows more time to observe and develop group strategies (witches or villagers), by communicating in a non-verbal way. It can be useful to pause the game sometimes in order to ask the children what strategies they are using, if they are playing as individuals (not being touched) or as a group (freeing their playmates). Insist that cooperation is paramount for the game to work well.

Note: physical contact might seem difficult for certain children (putting your arms around someone is not always easy, especially for pre-adolescents). It is therefore possible to ask the children to find another creative way of freeing the victims (going under their legs, or something else). But the idea of a hug helps build links and trust. The freed victims can also thank the child who has hugged them (by a nod of the head, thumbs up, a simple thank you, etc.).

## Feedback

- How do you feel the game went? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease? For what reason?
- How did it feel not to run nor speak? Can you explain?
- Was it easy to be fair all the time? If not, for what reason?
- What were the strategies amongst the witches, amongst the villagers?
- How did it feel to put your arms around your playmates to free them? Is this physical contact pleasant or unpleasant? For what reason?
- Did you choose the people you wanted to free? For what reason?

- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?

### Links with child protection

This game requires physical contact which may allow the animator to notice the children who are too open to such contact or those who are bothered by it. He can also ask if there is a reason for such behaviour. The question of acceptable and unacceptable touching and personal limits can be dealt with.

This game can also provide the opportunity to talk about situations when the children felt impotent or 'bewitched', without knowing what to do. The animator can perhaps explore what the child could have done at that time, whom he could have asked for support.

Use of the witch character means the animator can talk about the 'bad people' to avoid in real life; and the villagers who free each other can be linked to the protectors in the real world: in concrete terms, who can they turn to if they need protection?



## 10. The Little blind Train

### International

This short non-verbal game develops a number of traits. It is ideal to start or finish an activity calmly, for re-centring a group that is dispersed. The concepts of following, obeying

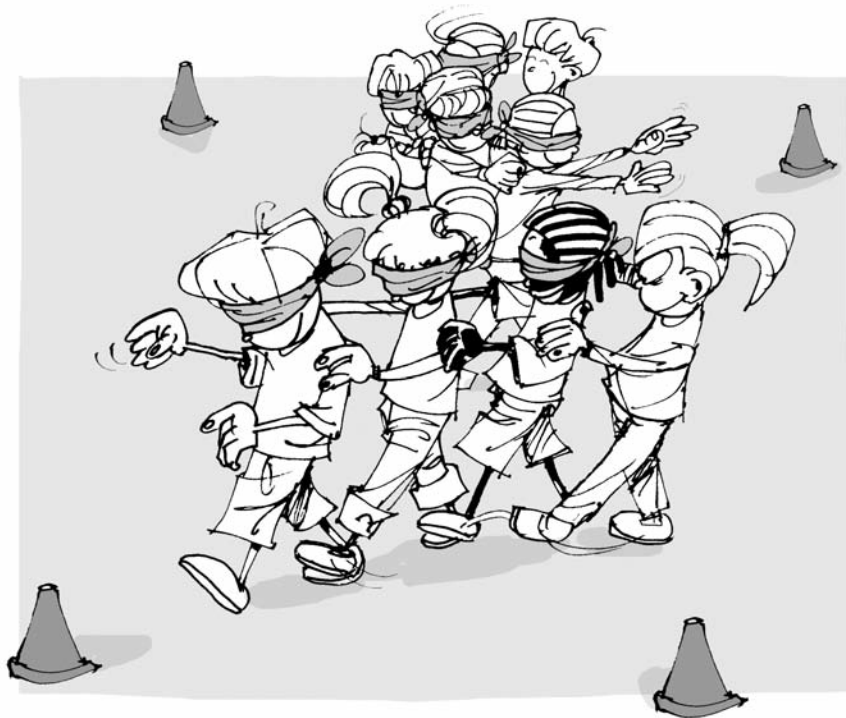
or taking their own responsibilities can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

6-12 yrs

### Abilities

- On a mental level, the children develop concentration and observation skills, as well as letting go.
- On an emotional level, the children develop both trust and non-verbal communication. The players who have their eyes closed must trust the players who have their eyes open and who are responsible for the group. Personal responsibility and fair-play are also important for those whose eyes are closed (they should not open them), as well as the respect for others through the sense of touch.
- On a physical level, nothing in particular; but orientation in space is important, because the game is played blind.

**Materials:** a few scarves to cover the eyes (not compulsory).



## Organisation

The players place themselves one behind the other in groups of four or five and hold on to each other's shoulders. The last child, the engine, keeps the eyes open; the others, the carriages, have their eyes closed (or otherwise wear a headband/scarf on their eyes). The last player must drive the train by giving non-verbal signals through touching: to move forward, pressing the hands simultaneously on the shoulders of the player in front, who passes on the message received, until the first one receives it and starts forward; to go to the right, pressing the right shoulder; to go left, the left shoulder; to stop, lifting both hands off the shoulders (no contact). The aim of the game is to walk in the designated area without the trains colliding.

## Rules

The carriages are not allowed to open their eyes.

## Advice

It is useless, even counter-productive to start immediately with a train of more than four children (especially avoid to take the whole group at once), because this makes it too difficult and unlikely that the players learn anything. The animator must therefore separate the group into several little trains for the most optimal experience. Later on, and if the children have really understood the principle of the game and feel confident, it is possible to add carriages to the trains.

The animator must insist on the level of concentration, precision of messages and often also on gentleness in any contact. To compensate for having no sight, the tendency is to touch roughly. Note: the pressure should not be continuous, but the message should pass as quickly and clearly as possible from the last player to the first one, who is the one who activates the movement. The difficulty can be in the delay between the order being given and the movement taking place. The tendency is to receive the message, understand it and obey even before passing it on. Often, the first time, the trains deliberately

collide with each other, when in fact the aim is to avoid one another. It is good to remind everyone that it is a game where they learn to trust (the carriages) and become trustworthy (the engine). Insist on the need to anticipate changes in direction (the engine). The roles are very different (middle, front and back), which is why it is important that the roles are changed so that everyone has a chance to try each position.

To make the game more difficult, it is possible to place obstacles that each train must go around without touching. The game can also be played by trotting around, or by making the trains longer, with more players.

## Feedback

- How do you feel the game went? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease? For what reason?
- What was your favourite role? Engine or carriage? And the easiest position (middle, front, etc.)? For what reason?
- Did you feel confident with your eyes closed?
- Are there some 'engines' that are more secure than others? Can you explain?

- What was the strategy for avoiding other trains?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

This game works on the fact of seeing or not seeing, following or not following, trusting or not, which can arouse fears or resistance. Certain people do not like taking orders. Are there times in life when it is good, when it is important to do what someone else tells us? What is it like obeying parents, adults?

This game is also about responsibility, being a leader. Are there times when the children have too much responsibility (e.g. looking after younger children in the family)? Or is having responsibilities a good thing? How does this happen? What do they feel? Exploring the two poles, between taking responsibilities, deciding and following, obeying allows the children to understand that sometimes they have to do what they

are told for security reasons or for their own good, even if they would rather do something else.



# 11. freeze/unfreeze

## Albania

This game is very useful for generating a good feeling in the group. It develops both creative thinking and imagination through body language, as well as self-confidence and

respect for others. Being 'frozen' can be associated with situations of helplessness or vulnerability linked to child protection.

8-12 yrs

### Abilities

- On a mental level, concentration is needed to keep a straight face (not laugh or move), as well as creative thinking and imagination in finding new expressions.
- On an emotional level, self-confidence is developed by the child who 'plays the idiot' to entertain the others; respect and non-judgement are fundamental for the others.
- On a physical level, balance, coordination and precision when making passes are developed, as well as use of body language to make the others laugh

**Materials:** one or two balls.

### Organisation

It is interesting to start this game by bringing an imaginary ball 'to life'. The children form a circle and each one in their own way brings the ball to life (by pretending to



hold it against their chest, by blowing on it, etc.). Then they give it carefully to their neighbour who takes it and passes it on round the whole circle. Then a real ball appears that the children throw around. At first they stay in the circle and do not move. Next, they walk in the circle and the ball is no longer thrown to the neighbour but as fast as possible to anyone in the group. When the ball falls, everyone freezes in whatever position they are in. The one who dropped the ball, and who froze everyone, becomes a flame that tries to unfreeze the others by gesticulating, making noises, making faces or laughing, but without touching them. The first child who moves or who makes a sound (laughter, speech) becomes another flame that helps to unfreeze the rest of the group; and so it goes on until there is only one frozen player left. Then passes with a new 'magic ball' start again.

### Rules

It is forbidden to touch (physical contact) when unfreezing a person.

### Advice

It is recommended to do another exercise in preparation for this game, because the group should feel well and comfortable in expressing themselves (e.g. *Names and Gestures* from the first games manual).

It is possible to add another ball to make the game more difficult and offer more possibilities for unfreezing. In this case, the first ball falling freezes everyone, and the other ball automatically stops being passed around.

The way the children move around or how the ball is thrown can change to make the game more interesting (running, backwards, side-stepping, feet together, changing direction, ball over the head, ball between the legs, etc.).

The object that represents the 'ball of life' can change, for example a frisbee, a basketball, a tennis ball, etc. to vary a bit and make the game more difficult.

### Feedback

- How did you feel during this activity? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease, uneasy? For what reason?
- How did you feel in the role of the person

who had to make the others laugh? For what reason?

- What was the atmosphere like during the game (making fun or respectful)? For what reason?
- What were the strategies used?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

It is recommended to avoid associating the theme of freezing/unfreezing with that of abuse, because it is too delicate to handle in such a context. A therapeutic group would be more appropriate. We can talk here about situations where the children have felt helpless, vulnerable and dependent on others to regain their 'life'. What did they feel when they did not know what to do and who to turn to, which solutions did they find, was there anyone to help them? Etc.

## 12. Touch The Color

### Albania

This dynamic, fast pace game is useful for working on sense of responsibility, fair-play and cooperation, while developing response and concentration. The notion of security

(places and people) can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

8-12 yrs

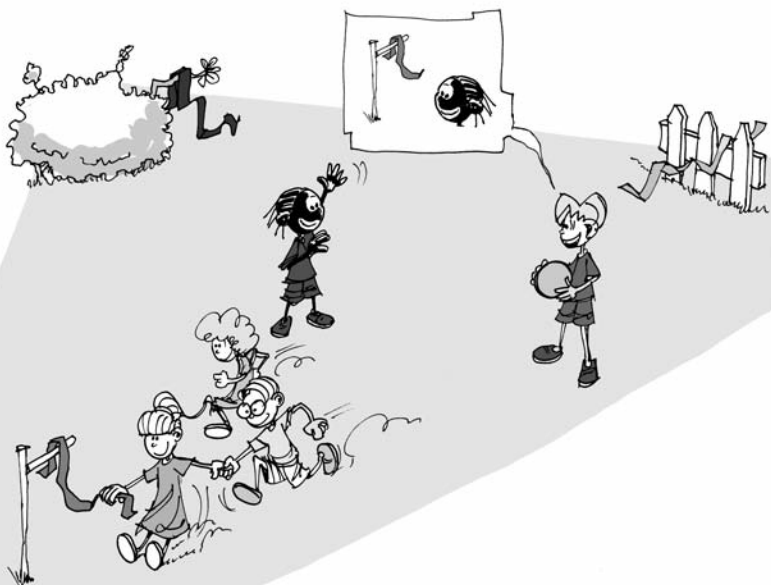
### Abilities

- On a mental level, the children work on observation and concentration skills when remembering the players who have been called.
- On an emotional level, the children develop fair-play, a sense of responsibility and cooperation.
- On a physical level, responsiveness is important as well as speed.

**Materials:** three different coloured ribbons or pieces of material; a ball.

### Organisation

Three different coloured ribbons or material are hung up somewhere in the play area, for example on a barrier, a chair, a bush or anywhere that is within the children's reach. The play area, in the shape of a triangle, is defined by the ribbons with a



different colour at each point. The size of the triangle depends on the size of the group. The participants stand in the middle of the area and one player is designated to throw the ball as high as possible above himself, while calling out a colour and a first name. The player who is called must catch the ball as quickly as possible and say 'stop'. Simultaneously the other players run to touch the related colour; in order to be safe from being touched by the player with the ball. These players hold hands, forming little chains of three players, like bunches of grapes (the first one touches the colour; the second holds the free hand and the third the second one's hand). When they hear 'stop', they must stop immediately where they are and the player with the ball tries to touch a player who is not in contact with the coloured material or the hand of another player. If he manages, he keeps the ball and can again call out a colour and a name. If he is not successful, there is a second try. If he misses again, all the players return to the centre and the player he was trying to touch takes his place and throws the ball into the air.

### Rules

The ball must be thrown up high and right above the head of the player.

The colour is called out first, with a clear voice, and then the name of the person.

The player with the ball cannot move around with it.

The same player cannot be called twice.

The same player cannot call more than twice in a row a colour and a name, even if he manages to touch a player a third time.

The chains of players cannot be longer than three people.

### Advice

The animator must make sure that all the children are called at least once. He must therefore remind the children to concentrate so that they can remember who has been called and who has not.

If the game is too easy or in fact too difficult, the coloured ribbons can be moved further apart or closer together.

To create more teamwork, the players can be asked to run in pairs, holding hands. In this case, the chains comprise a maximum of four participants.

When the players know the rules well, the ribbons can be removed and any colour found on the children's clothes or in the surrounding area can be called out. This requires more concentration and allows more variety in the safe havens.

Another variation could be that if the named player catches the ball in the air (without it falling) he can, instead of saying stop, immediately call out another colour and another name, which adds another dynamics to the game.

### Feedback

- How did you feel during this activity? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease, uneasy? For what reason?
- How did you feel when your name was called out? For what reason?
- How did you feel when you were in the chain near the nominated colour? Explain.
- Can you think of other rules that would build more cooperation and strategies into the game? Which ones?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what? What other variations of the game can you think of?

- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

Since this game allows the players to explore the idea of safe places, it is possible to talk about safety in general, what makes them feel safe or not, how do they know if a place or a person is safe, etc. It is also possible to mention various situations when the children are safe or not (going to school alone, playing with fire, following a person they do not know, etc.).



## 13. The old blind lady

### Romania

This calm game focuses on the use of imagination and cooperation. A number of notions linked to child protection can be dealt with, particularly fears, the secure base or trust-

worthy people, obstacles or dangers, maybe even the idea of 'home' for migrant, displaced or refugee children.

8-12 yrs

#### Abilities

- On a mental level, the children learn to find creative strategies to guide the old blind lady.
- On an emotional level, the children develop communication skills, cooperation, personal responsibility and respect for others.
- On a physical level, the children practise their sense of orientation and experiment with physical contact during the guessing part.

**Materials:** natural items (leaves, sticks, flowers, stones, etc.) ; scarves to cover the eyes ; chairs for the children-obstacles; table or other large object for the house.

#### Organisation

At the beginning, the children listen to the story of 'Baba Oarba', an old blind woman



who lives in a small house in the forest. During the day she manages to gather her food in the forest, because she is not totally blind, but in the evening she has trouble finding her way home. She needs somebody to help her return to the house by avoiding the obstacles in the forest (fallen trees, animals, strong wind, etc.). She needs to find trustworthy friends to guide her, like the fireflies with their small lights.

During the introduction, Baba Oarba must find and recognize her friends. A volunteer (Baba Oarba) goes into the centre of the circle blindfolded and all the other children walk slowly in the play area. Baba Oarba approaches somebody to guess who it is by touching the head and shoulders (not the body) and says the first name. During this guessing part everyone stops and watches. If she cannot guess, the other children can help her by giving clues, but without ever saying the child's first name. Once the child is recognized he becomes Baba Oarba, is blindfolded and must find another friend. And so it goes on until each child has had a turn at being blindfolded and getting a feeling for what it is like not to be able to see.

For the main part of the game, the children

are divided into groups of three: Baba Oarba, a firefly and an obstacle from the forest. To make these groups, one idea would be to scatter a certain number of natural elements (leaves, sticks, flowers, stones, etc.) on the ground, corresponding to the number of groups which the animator wishes to create. Then each group places themselves at a good distance from the house (table or another large object) which is in the centre of the circle. Baba Oarba's aim is to return safely to the house without running up against any obstacles, and with only the firefly's voice to guide her (no touching). The obstacle (the child on the chair) moves just in front of her to make the task more difficult. Depending on the space available, there can be fixed obstacles like hoops, empty chairs, stones, etc. Once Baba Oarba gets home, the group changes roles. The game finishes when each child has had a chance to try all three roles.

### Rules

The obstacle is a child sitting on a chair, who moves around by holding on to the chair which cannot be put right in front of Baba Oarba so as not to hurt her; the chair must be at least a meter ahead of her.

The firefly does not have the right to touch Baba Oarba.

### Advice

At the beginning of the game, the children can also be sitting down while Baba Oarba guesses (to have less agitation and more control to start with). But each time Baba Oarba changes and is blindfolded, the children must change places so as not to make the guessing part too easy.

An alternative for guiding without speaking (right, left, stop, etc.) could be to associate a sound with each order; or if we want to work on non-verbal communication, it is possible to guide by touching: the left shoulder, right shoulder; on the head to stop, etc. to develop the sense of touch.

To focus more on the imaginative side of the story, the obstacles can imitate the danger which they represent, for example, instead of sitting down on the chair; they can imitate a tree, and if Baba Oarba wants to be able to move forward, she must guess what it is, etc. If the time available is short, the first guessing part can be curtailed and the teams can be chosen more quickly: four or five Baba Oarba (if there are 12-15 children) are blindfolded

and the other children walk in a circle. Each Baba Oarba chooses a friend firefly by guessing who they are, and the remaining children become the obstacles and each join a pair of children. Thus the groups are made.

If a child cannot play for some reason, he could be given the role of 'cuckoo' which sings 'cuckoo' to start the game and each time a Baba Oarba arrives at the house, for example.

### Feedback

- How did you feel during this activity? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease, uneasy? For what reason?
- What was the most difficult role? For what reason?
- What strategy did you use to get to the house the fastest?
- What did you need to reach the goal?
- What abilities did you use?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

Several notions can be dealt with in relation to child protection. The use of a scarf and the fact of being blind provide the opportunity to talk about fear of the dark and other fears. What to do when they are afraid, who to turn to? The firefly, representing a kind of secure base, makes it possible to discuss which persons they trust, or mistrust, for which reason, what makes them at ease or not? The obstacles can represent something or somebody who misleads or who prevents them from doing something, people they should mistrust. The 'house' makes it possible to talk about the concept of safety, how to find their way home, and what resources they can rely on, where are the dangers? In the case of migrant, displaced or refugee children, what make them feel 'at home', where is 'home' for each of them? Etc.

## 14. Where were you?

### Moldova

*This very dynamic game is interesting to work on body language in a fun and/or theatrical way. It can be an introduction for working on a particular theme. The concept of emotions*

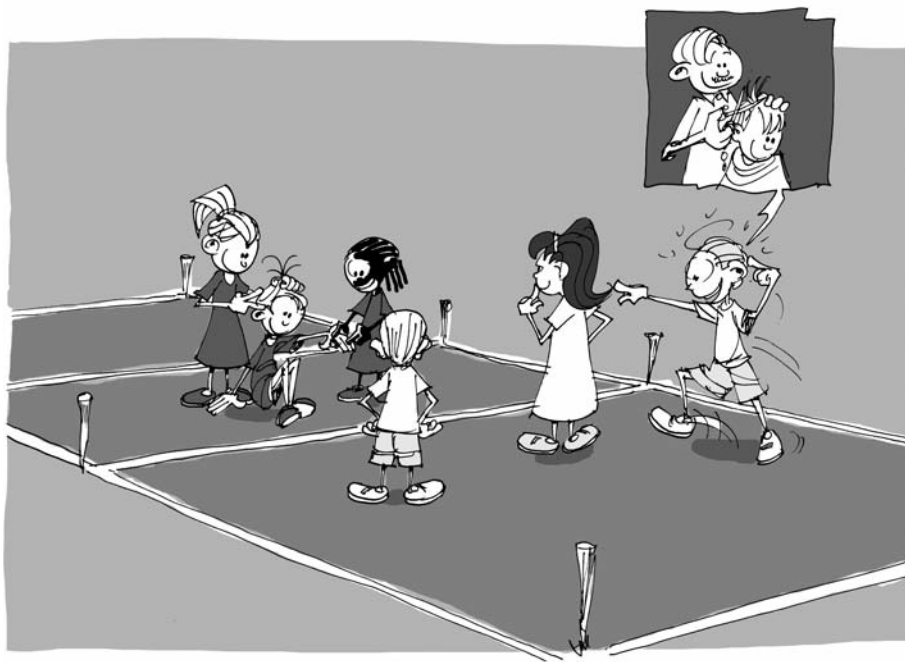
*(anger, fear) or situations that need to be felt, listened to, or recognized are all important in relation to child protection.*

**8-12 yrs**

### Abilities

- On a mental level, the children work on observation skills, as well as creative thinking and imagination. Their analytical capability is also developed to be able to guess the impersonations.
- On an emotional level, the children develop their self-confidence when trying to imitate the gestures. They work on negotiation and decision-making skills when choosing what they will impersonate, as well as cooperation when working together.
- On a physical level, responsiveness and speed are important, as well as ease of individual or group body language.

**Materials:** ropes or something similar to mark out the one meter central zone; cones or stones to mark the outside boundary of the play area.



## Organisation

Two teams of six to ten players stand on either side of the fairly large, delineated play area, separated by a one meter wide zone in the middle. Each team can decide on a group name, for example the Creative Ones and the Crazy Ones. The Creative Ones mime and the Crazy Ones guess. The teams gather at opposite ends of the area. The Creative Ones decide amongst themselves to choose an activity (e.g. playing football), an animal (e.g. duck) or a profession (e.g. hairdresser) to act out. Once they are ready they come to the central zone. The Crazy Ones also approach and say: "Where were you?" The Creative Ones answer "We will not say where we were but we will show you what we saw!" and they then begin the impersonation. Either each member of the group mimes in their own way, or they work in small groups. When the Crazy Ones manage to guess the mime, they say it out loud. If they are right, the Creative Ones run and take refuge behind their home base at the end of the area, before the Crazy Ones catch them. The players caught become members of the other team. Then, the teams change

roles, and the game continues as long as the players wish. At the end of the game, the team with the most players can for example do a sketch selected by the other team (2-3 min of preparation), thus continuing to work on their body language and creativity.

### Rules

Each team must line up along the central zone to do the mimes.

Those who are guessing are not allowed to cross the central zone line before finding the right answer.

The players touched within the boundaries of the play area join the other team.

The line at the far end of the area indicates the 'home base' for those being chased.

### Advice

It is important to point out the safety measures and need for respect during the chase and when touching the other children.

The animator must ensure everyone in the group has a chance to decide what activity to imitate. He must make sure the leadership role passes around and should facilitate communication within the group.

The animator can decide to limit the duration of the game, limit the number of chases and/or the number of mimes that are identified.

The size of the play area can be adapted to make the game more or less difficult from a physical point of view (length of the race).

The animator can let the children mime individually initially, but thereafter, the players should be encouraged to work together to develop cooperation, as well as self-confidence and trust.

A specific theme can be dealt with during this game (the sea, the family, my environment, etc.) to focus the group and reach a specific objective. This can be useful for a particular feedback session, for instance. More complex impersonations can be considered for older children (specific event, short piece of history, etc.).

At the end, the group can decide on a theme to create a mini-play for example.

### Feedback

- How did you feel during this activity? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? Did you feel at ease, uneasy? For what reason?

- How were the impersonations chosen? Was it easy or difficult to find ideas?
- Was there a leader in the group or was everyone able to put forward their ideas?
- What was participation like within the group?
- How did it feel having to change teams once you were caught? Can you explain?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If so, what?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

The theme of impersonation is central. The discussion can be directed towards which behaviour can be imitated or on the contrary should be avoided. When is it good or when is it bad to imitate somebody? The animator can also suggest a particular theme such as positive behaviours to imitate, or on the contrary acting out a dangerous situation (e.g. getting into a car with somebody that they do not know, playing with fire, etc.) and the other children must guess what is happening and discuss what

could take place instead. The notion of particular signs or emotions to look out for can be discussed like how can anger be recognized, fear, etc.? This provides the opportunity to explore how the children feel and show (or hide) their own feelings and emotions. Listening to their emotions can actually protect them, for example feeling scared and paying attention to the emotion can protect them from a danger. What should they do then, how should they react?



## 15. Three balls in the field

### Moldova

This ball game is a simple and fun introduction to volleyball and a game which trains the basic moves of the well-known ball games: moving around, catching and throwing a ball. But the central themes are more particularly

communication and cooperation, as well as reflexes. The notions of opponents (enemy) and partners (friends) can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

8-14 yrs

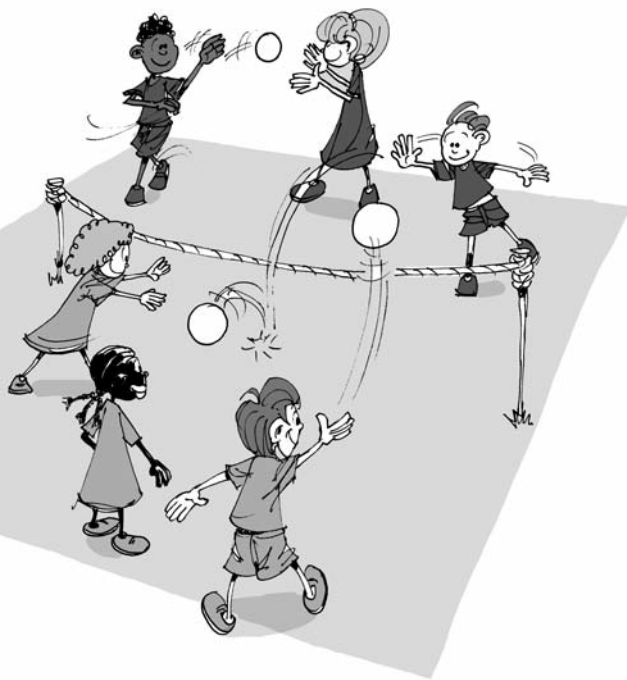
### Abilities

- On a mental level, the players must use strategic thinking to prevent the three balls from getting into their area.
- On an emotional level, the children develop observation and communication skills plus teamwork.
- On a physical level, various skills are worked on, such as reflexes, orientation, moving around, throwing and catching balls.

**Materials:** a net or a rope; three volleyballs (or foam balls, depending on the age and the level of the children).

### Organisation

The group is divided into two equal teams (three to five maximum per team), standing on each side of the play area which is divided in two by a net (rope, volleyball net, etc.). At the start, one team has two balls



and the other one ball. The aim of the game is that the three balls end up on the opposite team's side. For this to happen, they must pass the ball to one or two players on their team before throwing it over the net to the opposite team – and all this as quickly as possible. Each team tries its best to prevent all three balls ending up on their side of the net. The game begins with a first pass over to the opposite team, from the far end of the play area, by the team with the two balls (start). When the three balls end up on one side, the game stops, and the team without any balls scores a point. The match continues with two balls to the team which scored and only one for the other team.

### Rules

Initially, the balls can touch the ground (rebound) but must be picked up as fast as possible and thrown into the other team's territory.

Players must pass the ball once or twice amongst themselves before passing it again to the other team (see volleyball rule).

### Advice

It is useful to test the game and its rules before really beginning to score points, and to specify that it is not a matter of making volleyball passes at this stage, but simply catching the ball and throwing it again.

If the number of children exceeds ten, it is highly recommended to make three or four teams and create two play areas, or the teams rotate in one area, rather than add players in the two main teams. It is much better for the quality of participation, the children's learning and enjoyment!

Feedback during the activity should be directed towards communication within each team and best practice in catching and throwing the ball.

It is possible to vary the types of balls (basketball, tennis, balloons, foam balls, large balls, etc.) in order to develop the players' dexterity and ability to adapt.

If the players are beginners, the 'freeze' rule can be added, i.e. if a ball touches the ground it must 'freeze' for three seconds, which gives time to be more strategic and pay attention to the two other balls.

Additional balls can also be added depending on the age and the level of the players.

For bigger children, 'direct' passes, without bounces, should gradually be introduced, then volleyball passes.

### Feedback

- How was the game for you? Easy, difficult, fun, annoying? For what reason?
- Which strategies were used in your team?
- Did you play individually or more in groups? How?
- Did certain rules simplify or on the contrary complicate the game? Which and for what reason?
- Did you learn anything new? If so, what? What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

## Links with child protection

The notion of a team is central to this game with what that involves in terms of competition and cooperation; what makes a person an adversary or a partner; and with which criteria can they be recognized? How can they increase the number of their friends and avoid their enemies? The topics of discrimination, exclusion, or ways to increase teamwork can be dealt with. Are there situations where the children can collaborate to protect each other? Etc.



# 16. The dragon's tail

## Romania

Ball game rich in imagination where hunters must eliminate a dragon. Cooperation as well as the speed of reaction and of throws are central. The concepts of physical or emotional injury, intentional or not, and physical safety

can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

8-14 yrs



## Abilities

- On a mental level, concentration and observation of the movements of the ball, as well as strategic skills are developed.
- On an emotional level, this game works on the cooperation between hunters (not to keep the ball only to themselves), as well as respect and mutual confidence between the members of the dragon.
- On a physical level, the dragon develops resistance, because its members must move extremely quickly and sometimes for a relatively long period. Quick reactions are of primary importance. The hunters work on the precision of the passes and their shots.

**Materials:** one or two balls.

## Organisation

This game is played with at least ten children in two teams: the dragon-children and

hunters-children. The group stands in a circle and three to six children (depending on the size of the group, but around 1/3 of the total), volunteer to play the role of the dragon. They line up, one behind another, holding each other by the shoulders or waist. The first one represents the dragon's head, the others the body and tail. Their goal is to avoid being hit by the ball. The dragon's head is the only one who can use their hands to stop the ball and send it back to the hunters. The other children are in a circle around the dragon and represent the hunters; their goal is to eliminate the dragon by touching its tail. Once touched, the child representing the tail becomes a hunter. And so on until the whole of the dragon has been touched. The game ends when only the dragon's head is left in the centre. In order to be more efficient, the hunters pass the ball quickly to be in a better position to aim for the dragon's tail.

### Rules

The dragon-children's heads should never be aimed at, only hits below the shoulders count.

The hunters can only aim and touch the dragon's tail.

The dragon-children should never let go of

each other's grip, they must hold on to their playmates at all times.

Only the dragon's head can catch the ball and throw it back.

### Advice

Start with a warm-up that will prepare the players for the different situations, catching the ball, passing and/or aiming at a target, staying together in a group and moving quickly. Little games with this purpose can be put into practice (e.g. *The Snake biting its tail* from the previous games manual).

If the group is big (more than 12 players), it is recommended to start the game in two separate groups - less hunters and small dragons - to allow a gradual progression and better participation, shorter distances and quicker rotation between the different roles.

It is important to encourage hunters to develop an efficient strategy for passing the ball that includes everybody and not only the best players.

The eliminated dragon-children become hunters so that they participate in the game all the time. A possible variant could

be to move the tail child, once hit, to the place of the dragon's head. Once every player has taken the role of the head, another dragon may replace them. Or even another variation where instead of becoming hunters, the dragon-children who have been hit, become the guardian angels of the dragon, and they must distract the hunters by intercepting the ball (this however needs a bigger space), etc.

If the dragon is really difficult to eliminate, a second ball can be introduced to make the game easier for the hunters.

It is possible to invent a whole context for this dragon-hunt to give an entertaining and psychosocial dimension to the game: a story (tale) will help the children forget the physical aspects.

For more experienced players, the circle of hunters can side-step in one direction and then the other, in order to destabilize the dragon and make passing the ball more difficult.

To make it more complex, the distances can be extended (larger circle), a longer dragon can be introduced, etc. The diameter of the circle may vary, and also the distance between hunters, their position (sitting, crouched down) or using the

wrong hand (for the older children). The size of the ball may also vary (tennis-ball, volley-ball, etc.)

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? Easy, difficult, fun, boring? For what reason?
- Which role did you prefer? Dragon or hunters? For what reason?
- Which were the strategies employed in your group?
- Did you play more as an individual or rather collectively? How?
- Did certain rules simplify or on the contrary complicate the game? Which ones and for what reason?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If so, what?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

Through the elimination of the dragon, this game deals with the notion of hunter versus hunted and therefore the consequences of violence on others. Injury can be physical or emotional and violence may take different forms such as harassment, extortion, discrimination or abuse of the weak. Who does this, what does it mean and how to react to it? It is also an opportunity to help children understand that they can hurt someone psychologically, even unintentionally, and show them what to do to correct it. It is also about exploring, through the role of the dragon, the resources that can be put in place and used against aggression. The question of physical safety can also be dealt with.

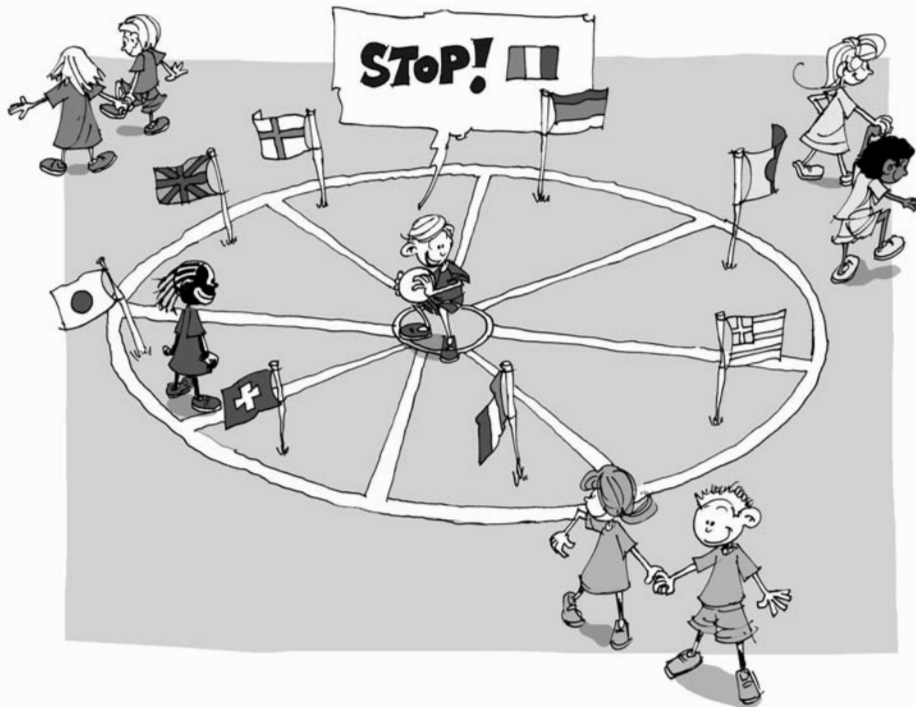
# 17. The countries

## Romania

The theme of countries and their characteristics, the intercultural aspects, the concept of non-discrimination and integration, collaboration, the race and the throws, all this makes

this game very complete. The concepts of country, of home can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

10-14 yrs



## Abilities

- On a mental level, observation skills, concentration and strategic thinking are worked on.
- On an emotional level, the children develop cooperation, communication skills and respect for others.
- On a physical level, responsiveness and speed are important, as well as coordination and agility (races in twos).

**Materials:** a ball; a hoop per child (or chalk, ropes or sticky tape).

## Organisation

The play area must be large, ideally outside, with a circle - metaphorically the 'world' - composed of several 'countries' represented by a section of the large circle (if it is drawn with chalk) or by several hoops side by side (one per player). In the centre

of the circle there is another hoop (or a chalk circle). The number of players can vary but there need to be at least ten children. At the beginning of the game, each child inside their own hoop, takes turns at naming the country they have chosen, while thinking of two typical characteristics of that country. The aim of the game is to discover the countries of the world by building alliances between them.

The game starts when the animator throws the ball high into the air by calling the name of a country. The representative of that country catches the ball as quickly as possible, runs into the central hoop and shouts 'stop'. Simultaneously and as soon as the ball has been thrown, the other 'countries' run out of the large circle as fast and as far as possible. When they hear the 'stop', they must stop immediately where they are. The child with the ball in the centre then looks around, names a country with which he would like to make an alliance and throws the ball to that person. From this moment on, the two countries form an alliance and function as only one country (they occupy only one hoop, run hand in hand, etc.). Everyone returns to their own hoop, and the two representa-

tives of the 'new country' share their two characteristics, then come to an agreement on one common point and invent a new country name.

The game continues with the 'new country' throwing the ball in the air and choosing another country, and so on, until the number of countries has diminished by at least half, or even until all the countries became one!

### Rules

The ball must be thrown in the air, very high, and not very far.

The player who has the ball is not allowed to move with it.

### Advice

If the group is large and for more cooperation, it is recommended to begin the game with two representatives of each country in the same hoop and who run holding hands.

Children should pay attention when all countries are named at the beginning, for they will have to remember them during the game.

The time for exchange of information (country characteristics) and choice of a

new name should not take too much time. The animator guarantees the rhythm and dynamics of the game.

To make the game more 'cognitive', the animator can add a session of information exchange on each country chosen before beginning the game itself. It is also possible to focus the discussions on a particular aspect (food, language, local customs, etc.).

### Feedback

- How did you feel this game went? Easy, difficult, fun, annoying? For what reason?
- How did you feel about choosing a country name and its characteristics? For what reason?
- How did you feel about making an alliance and 'giving up' the name of your country to find a new one?
- Did certain rules simplify or on the contrary complicate the game? Which and for what reason?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Did you learn anything new? If so, what?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

## Links with child protection

The notions of country, 'home', identity, are central in this game. This allows the children to explore the concepts of nationality, immigration, cultural belonging. What can they do in order to not lose their identity if leaving their country? What can they do or can others do to stay safe, even when they no longer have their own 'home'? What can they do to welcome others? What can they learn from associating with another culture? What does a novelty represent? Are there things they can implement to protect themselves when elsewhere? Are places known to them always safe? What makes a safe place? (e.g. trustworthy adults who take care of them, etc.).



## 18. The castle

### Romania/Albania

*This game based on an imaginary castle under attack requires the players to be skilful and use good team strategies in their respective roles. The notion of physical or emotional*

*wounds and care can be dealt with in relation to child protection.*

10-14 yrs

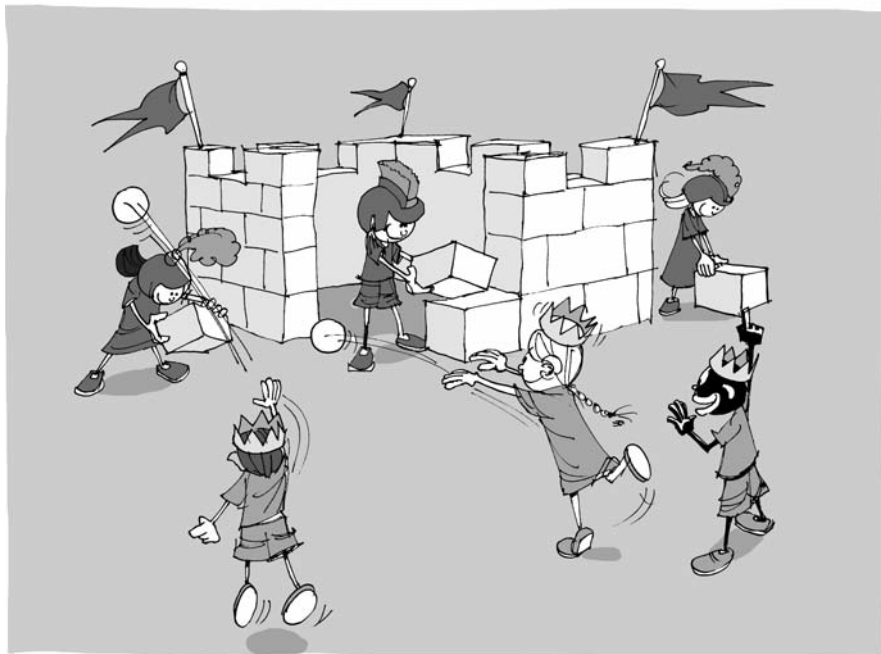
#### Abilities

- On a mental level, strategic thinking is important to be able to defend and/or rebuild the destroyed castle.
- On an emotional level, the children develop a sense of responsibility, fair-play and teamwork.
- On a physical level, responsiveness and speed are worked on, as well as being able to aim well.

**Materials:** two balls; seven-eight stones, if outside, or other objects that can be piled up.

#### Organisation

The group is divided into two equal teams from six to ten players, for example the Princes and the Knights. The team of the Princes builds a castle by piling up approximately seven-eight stones. The team of the



Knights must try to destroy the structure; they have two balls at their disposal, to be thrown from a distance of approximately five to ten meters depending on the age and the level of the players. The players, positioned in two columns, try one after the other to knock the castle down. When at least three stones have fallen, the castle is then considered destroyed. The Princes scatter the remaining stones within close range (1,5 meters), and the game really begins. It is the Knights turn to try to rebuild their own castle without being hit by the Princes who try to stop them by hitting them with the two balls. If a player is touched, they must stop short in the 'wounded' position. The Knights have the possibility of 'healing themselves' following a pre-defined way (e.g. hugging, shaking hands, going between the legs, etc.) so that the player can join in the action again. The game stops when the castle is rebuilt or if all the Knights are 'wounded'. Then the roles are reversed.

### Rules

It is forbidden to move with the ball.

Each player can only pick up and place one stone at a time.

A Knight touched by the ball must stop

short and drop the stones he has in the hand; he cannot quickly go and put the stone on the building.

### Advice

It is useful to try the game and its rules before really beginning.

This set of rules makes the teams to think about the most appropriate strategies to defend or attack the castle. Feedbacks during the activity should help to find the most useful strategies as well as the best ways to organise themselves for rebuilding the castle or defending it.

To encourage more collaboration, and depending on the age of the players, at least three Princes must pass the ball among them before being allowed to throw the ball at a Knight.

It is advisable to mark out a defined area, which, if not respected, brings about an automatic 'wound' to the players concerned. It is possible to add a 'prison' where the players go if they are hit by the ball, which requires the players to think of strategies to free the prisoner, far from the castle being rebuilt (new use of the space).

If a game finishes too quickly with two balls,

it can be started again with only one.

To make the game more difficult, it is possible to enlarge the play area, to get the attackers to hit the ball with their foot rather than the hand, etc.

It is of course possible to find other names for the teams and thus change the imaginary world of the game.

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? What was easy or difficult? For what reason?
- What abilities did you develop? How?
- Which strategies were used in your team?
- What did it feel like being Princes or Knights? For what reason? What do they represent to you?
- Did certain rules simplify or on the contrary complicate the game? Which and for what reason?
- Did you learn anything new? If so, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

## Links with child protection

This game makes use of the metaphor of the war of clans and the fact of being wounded and being healed. It is possible to explore what people (adults and children) do when they hurt somebody? Is that always done on purpose? Which kinds of wounds can be inflicted or can a person have (physical, emotional)? How can a wounded person be helped in one way or another? (e.g. by listening, comforting, taking them to the doctor, the psychologist, etc.). What can we do to help ourselves when we are hurt? Which kinds of emotional wounds can children inflict on each other? (e.g. not to be friends with, excluding someone from a game, making fun of somebody, insulting, etc.).



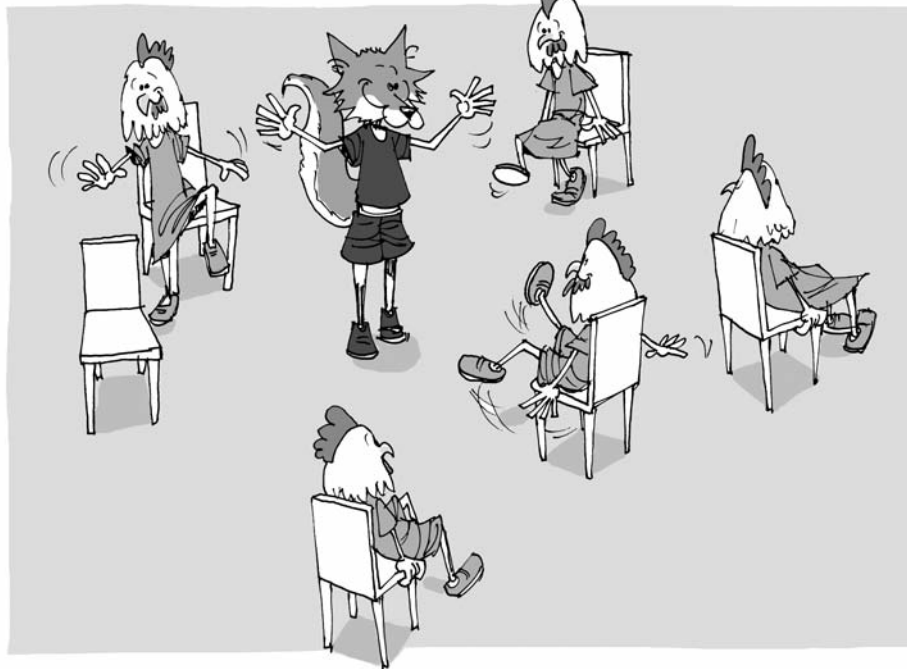
# 19. The fox and the hens

## International

Short game to warm up in a very lively and fun way. The children learn how to observe, react and coordinate their team movements in a strategic way. The notions of detecting good or bad intentions, as well as collabora-

tion as a strategy for protection can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

10-14 yrs



## Abilities

- On a mental level, the children learn observation concentration and strategic thinking in taking action collectively.
- On an emotional level, the children develop communication and cooperation, because acting individually would lead them to failure.
- On a physical level, good reflexes and orientation are necessary.

**Materials:** A chair or a hoop per child.

## Organisation

The chairs are spread randomly around the space and all the child-hens are seated, except for one child who has volunteered to play the fox. Only one chair is empty. The fox looks with envy at this big family of hens and he would like, not to eat them, but belong to their group and become

their friend so as not to be alone anymore. The hens are, of course, very afraid of the fox and want to prevent him at all costs from sitting down on the empty chair. The fox moves forward by taking tiny steps towards the empty chair; the hens must move about by changing chairs so that the fox cannot sit down. The game finishes when the fox manages to sit down on the empty chair.

### Rules

The fox cannot take large strides, and definitely not run. He must walk like an ant (i.e. one foot immediately in front of the other, both feet touching).

No physical contact is allowed.

### Advice

To introduce the game, it is possible to suggest a short activity: the children move around freely in the space between the chairs; when the animator shouts 'fox', each one runs to sit down; when the animator says 'hens', the children move by imitating the hens (movement and sounds). When the animator says 'old sick fox', the children walk slowly towards a chair. The various instructions are repeated three-four times

until the children are familiar with slow or fast movements, and sitting down.

It is interesting to note the panic amongst the hens when the fox approaches; the lack of communication, dialogue and strategy are obvious. However they just need to understand the 'main tip': that the empty chair should always be as far as possible from the fox. Therefore the hens must anticipate the fox's movements and organise themselves, rather than react at the last moment.

Once the group is familiar with the way the game is played, the fox can walk at a normal pace to encourage better coordination amongst the hens.

If the animator reckons it takes too much time for the fox to find a place, another child can take on the role of the fox.

If the group is very large, two or even three foxes can be chosen. It is important that a maximum number of children try out the role of the fox.

The main point is to see if a group finds the simplest solution, i.e. allowing the fox to sit down after ascertaining that his intentions are to be friendly! If the group insists on escaping the fox, it is possible to calm everyone down by getting the children to sit in a tight circle. The animator gets them

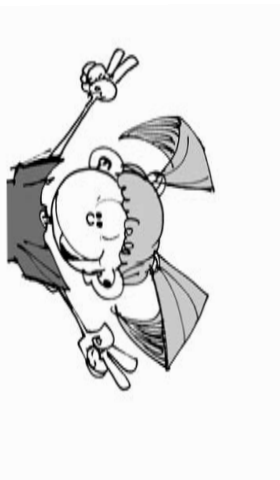
to imagine that the hens decided to be friends with the fox because it is a cold winter and he assures them that he has enough to eat at home, but that he feels cold and lonely. Each hen imagines that he could be in the fox's shoes, needing heat and friends (concept of empathy). The children rub each other's shoulders, imagining that it is the fox, while imitating the noise hens make.

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? Was it easy, difficult, fun, etc.? For what reason?
- How does the fox feel when he is not accepted amongst the hens? How do the hens feel?
- How do you go about accepting somebody who is different?
- Which was the best strategy? For which reason?
- Did you learn anything new? If yes, what?
- What other variations of the game can you think of?
- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

## Links with child protection

The central themes of this game are differences, a sense of belonging, prejudices, discrimination, or the preys and the predators, enemies and friends. In this case the fox has good intentions, but how do you know that? Why judge people on appearances or what you think you know about them? What are the consequences of prejudices, discrimination, exclusion and how to avoid them? But in other circumstances, how can you recognize the real 'foxes' in life and know their real intentions? Are there situations where children think they can trust somebody but they are mistaken? How to behave if they are not sure of a person's intentions, who to go to, how to protect themselves? How to not remain alone in dangerous situations, but stay together to better protect themselves and the others? The notion of vulnerability can also be discussed. Who in the end feels most vulnerable or exposed, the fox or the hens, and why? The hens are supposed to be afraid of the fox because it usually represents a threat, but the fact that the hens are in group makes the fox more inoffensive and thus more vulnerable.



# 20. five passes ball

## International

A simple game that aims to work on the basic skills of well-known games such as basketball, football, handball, etc.: passing the

ball, attack, defence. The principles of opponents (enemies) and partners (friends) can be dealt with in relation to child protection.

10-14 yrs

## Abilities

- On a mental level, observation and strategic thinking are worked on for scoring points more quickly.
- On an emotional level, children develop communication skills, cooperation and respect for others.
- On a physical level, endurance, speed, orientation, precision and coordination are developed.

**Materials:** a ball; shirts of different colours for each team.

## Organisation

The group is divided into two teams of four to six players maximum. The goal of each team is to score points by passing the ball five times in a row without it falling on the ground or being intercepted by the other team. The passes must take place be-



tween several players. If the ball falls, the number of passes goes back to zero and the ball is given to the other team. If team A intercepts the ball, the scoring starts for team A. If there are three teams, the third team waits for their turn and replaces the winning team. If there are four teams, two play areas are needed and the teams swap over afterwards.

### Rules

No walking or running with the ball.

No touching or hitting the other players: no physical contact.

No passing the ball back to the player that they received it from.

### Advice

The animator starts as the referee at the beginning, then passes this role on to the players who should be able to referee themselves. Personal responsibility and the notion of 'fair-play' are thus developed.

It is important that the animator correct the basic moves for passes, defence, attack, etc. and insist on good communication between the players (e.g. call the players by name before passing the ball, etc.).

The animator must also encourage the

teams to establish their defence strategy and use of space.

To make the game more difficult, the play area can be extended or the number of passes necessary to score a point increased.

To improve cooperation between players, other rules can be added (e.g. a point is not valid (or counts double), unless all the players of the team have touched the ball; or the players are paired up (by the waist, the ankles or knees depending on preference and safety) and play normally but in pairs.

### Feedback

- How did you feel the game went? Easy, difficult, fun, boring, etc.? For what reason?
- What was your strategy for scoring and for preventing the other team from marking points?
- Were the rules respected by all? If not, for what reason?
- Which other rules can be added to increase cooperation?
- Do you find refereeing yourselves difficult? For what reason?
- Did you learn anything new? If so, what?
- What other variations of the game can you

think of?

- Can you find links between this game and your daily life? Which ones?
- Etc.

### Links with child protection

It can be suggested that when a team scores a point, the other team can equal the score by correctly answering a question relevant to child protection or to children's rights in general. These questions can become more and more difficult and include useful information. The notion of team is central to this game including competition and cooperation; what makes the other person an opponent or a partner; how can they be recognised, are there any situations in which the children can collaborate to be better protected? Etc.

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